THE HISTORY OF THE SCOTTISH STAGE.

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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

SCOTTISH STAGE,

FROM ITS FIRST ESTABLISHMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME;

WITH

A DISTINCT NARRATIVE OF SOME RECENT THEATRICAL TRANSACTIONS.

THE WHOLE

NECESSARILY INTERSPERSED

WITH

MEMOIRS OF HIS OWN LIFE,

BY JOHN JACKSON,

TEN YEARS MANAGER OF THE THEATRE ROYAL OF EDINBURGH.

"*Quid Sophocles, et Thespis, et Æschylus utile ferrent.*"

HOR. EP. L. 2.

'Twas late or ere our Bards adorn'd the Stage,
When Thomson, Home, and Ramsay fill'd the page.

EDINBURGH:
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AND G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.
1793.

G.R. III.
BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

THE PUBLIC

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,

THIS BOOK

IS MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR MUCH OBLIGED,

MOST GRATEFUL,

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

J. JACKSON.

Edinburgh, March 1793.

10

CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

SECT. I.

Introduction—Whitſon plays, why ſo called—Oppoſition to theatrical repreſentations—Plays performed gratis, under the denomination of concerts—Anecdotes of Lord Somerville, and Provoſt Drummond—Performers patroniſed by perſons of diſtinction—Strange occurrence in a pantomime—Prejudice againſt the drama—Duke of York's company at Holyrood-Houſe—Plays under Madame Violante in Carubber's Cloſe—Different companies in Merchant Taylor's Hall—Canongate Theatre built—Mrs Ward there—Firſt ſtone laid by Mr Ryan—His character, - 1

SECT. II.

Tenures of the theatres in Europe—Revival of ſtage plays in England—Origin of the patent in Covent Garden—Of the theatrical property

property in Edinburgh—Mr Lee proprietor, and manager—Lords of Seſſion, and other gentlemen, proprietors—Mr Callender their manager—Mr Digges and Mrs Ward there—Tragedy of Douglas brought out—Mr Love manager—Mr Jackſon's appearance in Edinburgh—Mrs Bellamy there, 25

SECT. III.

Anecdotes of the Reverend Mr Jackſon A. B.—Of Archbiſhop Blackburne—Election matters—Anecdotes of the late Earl of Thanet and Lady Bingley—Of the late worthy Archbiſhop Drummond—His ſentiments reſpecting the ſtage, - - 43

SECT. IV.

The reſignation of Mr Love—Mr John Dowſon and Mr David Beatt managers—Diſputes with Mr Stayley—Riots in conſequence—Demolition of the interior parts of the theatre—Anecdotes of Mrs Ward, Mrs Baker and Mr Younger—Theatre, property, and patent, purchaſed by Mr Roſs—The preſent Theatre Royal built—Mr Foote manager—Meſſrs Digges and Bland—Cori—Wilkinſon

ſon—The Theatre and its appendages purchaſed by Mr Jackſon, - - 58

SECT. V.

Liſts of performers at the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh, from the year 1781, *to* 1792, *inclusive,* - - - 84

SECT. VI.

Origin of the Glaſgow Stage—Plays in Barrel's dancing-hall—In a temporary booth in the caſtle-yard—Mr Lee manager—Mr Digges and Mrs Ward there—The houſe aſſaulted by the mob—A regular Theatre at the weſt end of the town erected—Stage ſet on fire—Mrs Bellamy there—Williams manager—Brown, the famous Copper Captain, there—Meſſrs Jackſon, Bland, and Mills—Theatre burnt—New one erected in Dunlop Street—Some impediments to it—How removed—Theatre opened—Arrangements of the future ſeaſons, 95

SECT. VII.

Mrs Barresford in Edinburgh—Mrs Siddons' introduction there—Conſequences reſpecting temporary engagements—Embarraſſments attend-

ing the manager therefrom—Similar occurrence to Mr Wilkinſon, at Beverley, 115

SECT. VIII.

Renewal of the patent—Tranſactions concerning it—The rights of the Lord Chamberlain of England, reſpecting theatrical repreſentations—Impartiality of the Duke of Grafton, in that office—Mrs Siddons again in Edinburgh—Mr Fennell there, - - 138

SECT. IX.

Diſputes with the audience relative to Mr Fennell—The manager's conduct on the occaſion—Obſervations reſpecting the parts of Pierre and Jaffier—Garrick, Barry, and Moſſop in thoſe characters—Their different powers—The manager's general arrangement of characters—Provincial Theatres more liable to diſputes reſpecting performers than thoſe of London—Anonymous letter—Its effects—The manager's apology—Mr Fennell's diſmiſſion—Conſequences to the manager—Reflections thereon—His own vindication. - 149

SECT.

SECT. X.

Theatrical ſeaſon of eighty-nine ſucceſsful—That of ninety not ſo—Reaſons why—Deficiency in the manager's finances—Cauſes thereof—Annual receipts and expences of the Theatre—Nightly expences—General ſtatement of funds and diſburſements—Effects of the Circus upon the Theatre Royal, - - 177

SECT. XI.

Mrs Eſten's firſt appearance—Her ſucceſs and attraction—Letter to Mr Harris concerning her—Other occurrences—Letter relating to Mrs Billington's engagement—Her ſtation in the vocal line, - - - 193

SECT. XII.

A ſtatement of facts relative to Mr Stephen Kemble, - - - - 201

Letters to the Honourable Henry Erſkine, Dean of Faculty, - - - 217

SECT. XIII.

Letter to the Right Honourable, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, - - 241

SECT. XIV.

Purport of the Dean of Faculty's decreet-arbitral, - - - - 274
Observations upon it, - - - 275

SECT. XV.

Treaty with Mrs Atchmet—Her character as an actress—Value of divided theatrical property explained—Mr Colman's share of Covent Garden—Deducement therefrom—Explanatory observations, - - 287

SECT. XVI.

The Gentle Shepherd—Observations upon it—Its estimation as a pastoral—As a stage performance—Its introduction upon the Canongate Theatre—Case of Drummond the printer—Effects thereof upon the finances of the Theatre—Upon stage prejudices in general, 305

SECT. XVII.

Observations upon the tragedy of Douglas—The Reverend John Home prosecuted as the author of the play—And other ministers for being present at its representation—The tragedy vindicated from the imputations and criticisms of the presbytery, - - 313

SECT.

SECT. XVIII.

Effects of the tragedy of Douglas upon the author's purſuits—Its original caſt in Covent Garden—Mrs Woffington—As an actreſs—Her figure—Anecdote of Mr Holland in Hamlet—Mr and Mrs Yates—The author's introduction to Mr Garrick, - 331

SECT. XIX.

The deciding upon dramatic pieces or perſons embarraſſing to a manager—Conſequence of refuſals—Mr Garrick's general mode on thoſe occaſions—Effects of his indeciſions—Applications to Mr Foote—To Mr Rich—Anecdotes of the latter—As a manager, and machiniſt—As a Harlequin, by the name of Lun—Celebrated by Pope—His general character, - - - 347

SECT. XX.

Party prejudices—How they operated with reſpect to the performance of Douglas—Upon other productions of the ſame author—Riot in the Canongate Theatre, occaſioned by the ſong of Culloden—On the performance of High Life Below Stairs—Bad effects of admitting ſtrangers

gers behind the ſcenes—Its cuſtom aboliſhed—Deciſion of the Lords, reſpecting diſturbances in the front of the houſe—In favour of the manager—Conſequences of thoſe regulations, 371

SECT. XXI.

Two companies at the ſame time in Edinburgh—Effects of two Theatres formerly in London—In Dublin—Liſts of the two companies in Edinburgh—Diſcuſſions before the Lords of Seſſion—Their interlocutors reſpecting the Theatre Royal—Mrs Billington there, - 385

SECT. XXII.

Supplementary obſervations—Upon the Stage in general—Natural propenſity to dramatic repreſentations—Their eſtimation among the ancients—Origin of ſtage prejudices—Robin Hood's plays—Popular in Scotland—Diſturbances in Edinburgh attending their ſuppreſſion—Stage exhibitions vindicated—Their propriety—Their utility, - - - 397

CONTENTS

OF THE

APPENDIX.

No. I. *Entertainment of King Charles, in his ancient and Royal City of Edinburgh,* - - 3
No. II. *Letter from the Earl of Fingall to Provoſt Drummond,* - - - - 12
No. III. *Letter from Mr Biggsby to Mr Jackſon—To Provoſt Drummond from the ſame,* 12–13
No. IV. *Extracts from acts of parliament, reſpecting theatrical exhibitions—for which ſee pages* 300, 301, 303, 304. *ſtatute* 12*th Queen Anne,* 10*th George* II. *February* 1. 1736. 10*th George* III. *c.* 27. *Anno* 28*th George* III. 1788, - - 15
No. V. *Prologue to Oroonoko, on Mr Jackſon's firſt appearance in Edinburgh,* - - 16
No. VI. *Prologue before the Drummer, or the Haunted Houſe, at the time of the Cock Lane Ghoſt—Prologue before the Maſons Play,* - - 17
No. VII. *Comparative view of Mr Foote's Company* 1771, *with that of Mr Jackſon's in* 1790, 20–21
No. VIII. *Anonymous letter to the manager concerning Mr Fennell,* - - - 22
No. IX. *Referred to in* No. VIII. *as above,* 22
No. X. *Requiſition to the manager concerning Mr Fennell, ſigned Henry Erſkine, and by other advocates and writers,* - - - 22

No.

No. XI. *Certificates from John Gibb box-keeper, and William Sutherland servant to the Theatre, concerning the arrangement of places, July 14th* 1788, 23
No. XII. *Memorial respecting the lease of the Theatres,* 1792, - - - - - 24
No. XIII. *Letter from Mr Gibson, with an offer for the Theatres, as agent for Mr Kemble,* - 28
No. XIV. *Answer by Mr Playfair,* - 29
No. XV. *Edinburgh Theatricals from the Argus,* 30
From the Public Ledger, - 31
No. XVI. *Admonition and Exhortation by the Reverend Presbytery of Edinburgh, relating to stage representations, January* 5. 1751, - - 34
No. XVII. *Resolutions of the Presbytery of Glasgow, respecting the Tragedy of Douglas,* - 37
No. XVIII. XIX. XX. XXI. *and* XXII. *having been inserted in the text, Sect.* VIII. *have consequently been omitted in the Appendix.*
No. XXIII. *Letter from Robert Hepburn, Esq;* 39
No. XXIV. *Letter from Mr Playfair to Mr Gibson,* - - - - - - 40
No. XXV. *Letter from his Grace the Duke of Hamilton,* - - - - - - 40

*** *There are a few typographical errors in the following sheets, which, as they affect not the ſenſe, are referred to the reader's correction. The* three *following, as applying to facts, with* one *reference to the Appendix, are neceſſarily pointed out:*

Page 26. *for* twenty-four *read* twenty miles.
Page 74. *for* Mrs *read* Mr Thomſon.
Page 113. In the notes, *for* 1781 *read* 1782.
Page 298. *for* No. XI. *read* No. XII.

In page 28. to Inigo Jones, the appellation of *Sir* was unintentionally prefixed: on enquiry we cannot find that Inigo Jones was ever regularly knighted, though we have the following authority that he was ſometimes ſo ſtyled:

One of Howell's letters to Ben Johnſon runs thus:

"I heard you was cenſured lately at court, that you have lighted too foul upon *Sir Inigo*, and that you write with a porcupine's quill dipped in too much gall. Excuſe me, that I am ſo free with you; it is becauſe I am in no common way of friendſhip.

Yours, J. H."

May 3. 1635.

Howell's letters, vol. I. § 6. No. 20. edit. 1650. Biographia Britannica, v. IV. p. 2773.

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IT was not my original intention in this treatiſe, to have entered into a minute inveſtigation of the riſe and progreſs of the ſtage at large; or even to have particulariſed its origin

and advancement in Scotland, to which part of the iſland the purport of the following pages ſhall as cloſely be confined as the nature of the ſubject will admit.

THOSE who wiſh to be acquainted with the minutiæ of the growth and culture of the drama in South Britain, may find ample gratification in the peruſal of Colley Cibber's Apology for his Life: And a review of Mr Arnot's Hiſtory of Edinburgh will greatly add to their general knowledge of the ſubject.

THIS publication having been rather deſigned as a narrative of my own perſonal tranſactions, no farther reſearches were intended to have been made into occurrences anterior to my *debut* on the Edinburgh theatre, but ſuch as extended their conſequences to, or had operated within the limits of my management.

BUT when I began to explore the tenure by which the theatrical property was, and is at preſent held, I found it neceſſary to repair to its ſource, that I might thereby find an opportunity of tracing the ſtream of right, flowing clear and unſullied from the fountain head.

As

As a member of the theatrical community, and as an early admirer of the profeſſion, I cannot but lament the very unpleaſing eſtimation in which it has been invariably held.—The diſgrace is obvious, and there is no diſguiſing it—And however individuals, thro' adventitious circumſtances, may have outſoared the contempt, the general odium remained in force, and, with ſome ſlight relaxations, ſtill continues to exiſt.

LET the public, who have affixed the ſtigma, declare the cauſe. Partial as I may be deemed upon the ſubject, I ſhall not from myſelf even hazard a ſurmiſe.

"WHERE could be the diſgrace," ſays Cibber, "of entering into a ſociety, whoſe inſtitution, when not abuſed, is a delightful ſchool of morality? and where to excel requires as ample endowments of nature, as any one profeſſion, that of holy inſtitution excepted, whatſoever *?"

IN the early ages of Chriſtianity, theatrical repreſentations had their origin from religious

* *Cibber's Apology.*

tenets. "The ſubjects were ſcriptural, the clergy the compoſers, the church was the ſtage, and Sunday the time of exhibition *."

THE cities of Cheſter and Coventry were remarkable for their dramatic exhibitions. The hiſtoric occurrences of the former, I have had occaſion minutely to inveſtigate. There they had their Whitſon Plays, ſo called from their being performed in Whitſon Week; which were acted in the open air, or under cover, as occaſions, I preſume, and circumſtances beſt ſuited.

IN 1529, in the ſtreet at the high croſs, was repreſented the play of *Robert Kyng of Cycyle*, or *Robert le Diable*, taken from a French morality of that title †.

A PIECE,

* *Arnot's Hiſtory of Edinburgh*, p. 74.

† Here is of Kyng Robert of Cicyle,
How pride dude hime beguile.

Robert, for his haughtineſs and pride, drew upon himſelf the wrath of heaven. A ſound ſleep ſeizes him in the church. An angel aſſumes his ſhape and dreſs, and takes his place in the palace. Robert awakes, but is unknown, and conſequently diſowned by his ſervants.—The angel makes him *the fool of*

A PIECE, called *The Aſſumption of our Lady*, was performed before Arthur Prince of Wales, the ſon of Henry the Seventh, at the Abbey Gate; and, in 1600, the annual repreſentations were in the church.

THESE performances were compoſed from paſſages in ſcripture, and thence called Myſteries. They had ſcriptural titles; ſuch as, *The Hiſtory of the Deluge*—*The Birth of Chriſt*—*The Death of Lazarus*—and, *The Laſt Supper*. In the exhibition, Time, Death, and Sin, were perſonified, and made capital performers in the *dramatis perſonæ*.

THEY were written by one Randal*, of the religious

the hall, and orders him to be clothed in that characteriſtic garb.

The fool Robert alſo went,
Clothed in lodly* garnement,
With foxes tayles mony aboute,
Men mighte him knowen in the route.

He is then ſent out to lie with the dogs; in which ſituation he cannot but envy the canine race that were permitted to remain in the royal hall. After a long, a rigorous, and ignominious penance, the angel reſtores King Robert to his royalty. *Warton's Ancient Poetry*, vol. I. p. 184, 188.

* *lothly*, lothſome.

* By Randal Higgenet, monk of Cheſter, An. 1327, 1328.

religious order of that city, originally in Latin, and afterwards tranſlated by himſelf into Engliſh, by permiſſion of the Pope, to whom he made a perſonal application for that purpoſe; and having been upon the acting liſt for near three centuries, were moderniſed for repreſentation in the year 1600. Randal was not the only author of theſe ſacred myſteries exhibited at Cheſter in 1532. By the proclamation for the Whitſon plays, that year, we are informed, that "a play, and declaration of divers ſtories of the bible, beginning with the creation, and fall of Lucifer, and ending with the general judgement of the world, to be declared and played in the Whitſonne weeke, was diviſed and made by Sir Henry Frances, ſome tyme moonke there; who gat of Clement, then biſhop of Rome, 1000 dayes of pardon, and of the biſhop of Cheſter at that tyme, 40 dayes of pardon, to every perſon reſorting in peacible manner to heare the ſayd playes; which were inſtituted to the honor of God by John Arnway, then mayor of Cheſter, his brethren, and whole commonalty thereof; to be brought forth, declared, and played, at the coſt and charges of the craftes men, and occupations of the ſayd citty *."

THESE

* *Harleian MSS.* 2013.

THESE compoſitions were not peculiar to Coventry and Cheſter; we hear of them at Clerkenwell*; and in all probability they are to be met with in the records of many other cities in England. At the beginning of the twelfth century, a religious ſpectacle, entitled, *A Miracle Play of St Catharine*, was compoſed by the abbot of St Albans, and acted at Dunſtable †.

WE read of them abroad at a very early period. A piece called *Chriſt's Sufferings*, was written by Gregory of Nazianzen, biſhop of Conſtantinople ‡.

WE learn from Cervantes, that the practice of repreſenting dramatic pieces on the Sabbath day prevailed in Spain in the ſixteenth century. The goat-herd, in his narrative to Don Quixot, ſays, "I forgot to tell you, that Cryſoſtom, the defunct, was ſuch a great man at compoſing couplets, that he made carols for Chriſtmas Eve, and *plays for the Lord's Day*, which

* By the pariſh clerks of London, whence that place was afterwards called Clerkenwell.

† About the year 1110. *Warton's Ancient Poetry*, v. I. p. 371.

‡ *Sancti Gregorii Nazianzoni opera*, v. II. p. 253.

which were repreſented by the young men in our village; and every body ſaid that they were tip-top *."

SOME of theſe dramatic pieces were compoſed intirely from moral ſubjects; and thence ſtiled *Moral Plays*, or *Moralities*; humorous paſſages were at length introduced; and the ludicrous naturally crept into uſe. Numbers choſe rather to laugh than to cry. Thus a kind of motley compoſitions ſucceeded; till at laſt, by degrees, they were formed into regular pieces of five acts, ſerious or comic, with the introduction of a prologue: and in this ſhape were they handed down to the preſent time, under the claſſical titles of Tragedy and Comedy.

AFTER theſe dramatic pieces, under the various titles of *Miracle Plays*, *Moralities*, and *Myſteries*, became prevalent and popular in England, it cannot be ſuppoſed but they would ſoon be introduced into this kingdom.

IN my preſent reſearches, I have met with a pub-

* *Don Quixot by T. Smollet, M. D.* v. I. p. 103.

a publication printed in Edinburgh 1633, which is now before me, entitled,

THE

ENTERTAINMENT

OF THE

HIGH AND MIGHTY MONARCH

CHARLES,

King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland,

Into his ANCIENT and ROYAL CITY of

EDINBURGH,

The Fifteenth of June 1633*.

THIS royal theatrical ſpectacle exhibited ſuch a variety of ſcenery, ſuch a characteriſtic propriety in the different habits, and ſuch apparent order and regularity through the whole, with a ſplendor I have hardly read of in ſo early a period, as, I am certain, if re-exhibited, would attract attention and admiration in this more refined age: And I am convinced, that the conductors and the actors concerned in it, muſt have been converſant in ſtage repreſentations.

* *Vide* Appendix, No. I.

Mr Arnot informs us, that dramatic performances in Scotland were very common in the beginning of the ſixteenth century: That after they were excluded from the churches, profane ſubjects were introduced, and performed in the open air. In a note, he ſays, "The place where theſe performances were exhibited was called the Play-Field: Few towns of note were without them: That at Edinburgh was at the Greenſide Well; that of Coupar of Fife was on their Caſtle Hill *."

The members of the church, with whoſe predeceſſors dramatic performances had originated, and by whom their modes of repreſentation had been adopted, were the firſt to promote their ſuppreſſion. They prohibited plays from being written upon divine ſubjects; forbade all kinds of performances upon Sundays; excommunicated all that ſhould attend them; and, finally, exploded them on every ſubject, and in every ſhape †.

In theſe theatrical perſecutions, the church of Scotland took the lead: and in after times, when

* *Hiſtory of Edinburgh*, p. 76. † *Spottiſwood's Hiſtory*, p. 456.

when dramatic entertainments were attempted to be renewed, its oppoſition to them more forcibly revived.

"The preſbyterian clergy," ſays Mr Arnot, "were poſſeſſed with the moſt illiberal and violent animoſity againſt the ſtage. The writings of their moſt popular divines repreſented the Play-houſe as the actual Temple of the Devil, where he frequently appeared, cloathed in a corporeal ſubſtance, and poſſeſſed the ſpectators, whom he held as his worſhippers *."

The magiſtrates kept pace with the clergy, reſtricting the comedians from acting within the limits of their juriſdiction. The preſbytery, in a ſolemn deputation, thanked them "for the juſt zeal they had ſhewn in the matter." An *act of exhortation*, againſt the frequenting of ſtage-plays, was drawn up by a committee of divines, which was read from all the pulpits in the diſtrict †. The condition of an actor in Edinburgh, in thoſe Gothic times, muſt have been as diſpleaſingly irkſome as that of an excommunicated culprit

* *Arnot*, p. 366. † Ann. 1727. *Arnot*, p. 367.

prit beneath the fulminations of the directors of the Inquiſition.

THESE over-violent proceedings of the clergy excited a ſpirit of party among the nobility and gentry, who made a point of ſupporting their theatrical amuſements, by forming parties for the boxes; and, to preſerve the performers from the perſecutions with which they were threatened, they procured for them perſonal protections.

THE actors had ſcarcely obtained their emancipation from this ſtate of bondage, which they had effected chiefly by the connivance of the law, and the announcing a *concert*, with a *gratis play*, at the head of their bills, when I had the honour of making my *entrée* upon the Edinburgh theatre, then in the Canongate, in the character of *Oroonoko*.

MR LOVE, who was joint leſſee with Mr Beatt, was acting manager. I came to him unnoticed, and unknown: I deſired a trial, and he inſtantly, with great politeneſs, complied with my requeſt. My reception was flattering; and the next day I was enrolled among

among the actors for the ſeaſon, upon the firſt ſalary in the company. I had now reached the ſummit of my wiſhes, and I bleſt my fortune for placing me there. Had ſhe run reſtiff in the onſet, and ſtopped me ſhort in my career, ſhe might perhaps, upon the whole, have been fully as much my friend: for I had reſolved, upon the failure of that evening, to have returned contentedly to my home, and applied myſelf to the line that had been chalked out for me; but,

"Youth and proſperity had made me vain."

I am confident, that at that moment I ſhould have preferred the figuring upon the ſtage in the Mock Majeſty of *Macbeth*, to the leading a regiment to the gates of Quebec, under the command of the gallant Wolfe.

I HAD ſome advantageous offers indeed of preferment, during my firſt ſeaſon in Edinburgh; but Mr Garrick's aſſurance of an engagement in Drury Lane triumphed over all other conſiderations.

OROONOKO was repeated again and again. Before the ſecond repreſentation, I was honoured

noured with the acquaintance of the late Lord Somerville *, who had been one of the active ſupporters of the theatre. Being the ſon of a clergyman, and an officer in the militia of England, I was ſoon favoured with many introductions of conſequence; and, among the reſt, I had a general invitation to Drummond Lodge.

PROVOST DRUMMOND had been a moſt ſtrenuous oppoſer of all dramatic repreſentations; and nothing but a very ſingular recommendation could have wrought ſuch a miracle in my favour, as the procuring the patronage of a man ſo reſpectable, and ſo oppoſite in his principles to the profeſſion in which I was embarked †.

ON a morning's viſit to the Lodge, the ſpot on which Mrs General Scott's houſe now ſtands,

* My introduction to that Nobleman was through a chance meeting in the King's Park; but his warm attachment, with which I was afterwards favoured, and which continued till his death, was the reſult of a letter his Lordſhip received from the Earl of Fingall, in whoſe family, in Berks, I had the happineſs, upon all occaſions, of being kindly received. See Appendix, No. II.

† This was effected by a letter from one of his intimate friends in London. Appendix, No. III.

ſtands, after ſome converſation with Mr Drummond, he was told his carriage was at the door. He apologiſed for his being under the neceſſity of going to town, and aſked me if I would take a ſeat in his chariot. I thanked him, and accepted of his offer.

We ſtopped facing the Exchange, where Lord Somerville happened to be. On our alighting, his Lordſhip came up to Mr Drummond, and, in his uſual blunt mode of addreſs, thus accoſted him:—

"Well done, Provoſt; do not you think now that you are a pretty fellow?"

"What is the matter, my Lord?"

"What is the matter! Why, I have in my poſſeſſion a letter from you, in which you declare, that the moment a man ſets his foot into a play-houſe, he ſets his foot into hell; and you have juſt now brought a *Play-actor* in your carriage, and ſet him down at the croſs of Edinburgh."

His

His Lordſhip, without waiting for a reply, turning to me, ſaid, "Come along with me, Sir, and I will ſhew you this very curious letter."

I ACCOMPANIED Lord Somerville to his apartments in Holyrood-houſe, where he looked out the epiſtle, in which I read the *ſtrong paſſage* before mentioned, with ſome other expreſſions equally forcible, condemning his Lordſhip for the active part he had taken in ſupport of the ſtage.

HE then informed me, that, in order to protect the performers from the violent meaſures adopted againſt them, ſome of the nobility were under the neceſſity of nominally announcing them as their menial ſervants: That a principal one had been received into his houſe as his butler; where, after performing *King Richard the Third* upon the ſtage, he diſdained not to enact the part of *Scrub*, by drawing a cork at his Lordſhip's ſide-table.

I WOULD not have it here ſuppoſed, that I have mentioned the above anecdote, to infer from thence, that I was honoured with the acquain-

acquaintance of the two perſonages concerned therein; or that I wiſhed thereby to ſhew, that I was exempt from thoſe indignities the other performers were compelled to put up with.

FAR different were the ſentiments this diſcourſe had engraved upon my mind. They were the effects of a firſt impreſſion, and have never ſince been effaced. I felt the compliment with a compunctious ſenſation, and eſteemed the civilities I had received upon the ſcore of perſonal recommendation, or that had flowed through a channel independent of the avocation in which I was then engaged, of infinitely leſs value.

THIS unpleaſing prejudice, attendant upon the ſituation of an actor, muſt have ever been diſguſting to indignant merit; and not only have prevented candidates of reſpect, and perhaps of very ſhining abilities, both male and female, "well born younger brothers, or beau-"ties of low fortune," as the great Laureat expreſſes it, from becoming ornaments to the profeſſion, but proved alſo an unſurmountable bar to the ſedate citizen, from contributing

towards, or embarking in the funds of a community, whoſe occupation was ſtruggling under the preſſure of ſuch an entailed diſgrace.

No man of ſubſtance would ſtep forward to promote the erection of a fabric for the repreſentation of profane pieces, excommunicated by the church, and interdicted by law *. Or, could it have been poſſible to find a maſter-builder hardy enough, in the face of the church's ban, to have encountered both the riſk and the cenſure, which, by the erecting a building for the purpoſe of a theatre, he muſt have laid his account with, I ſcarcely think a journeyman could have been procured bold enough to have handled a chiſſel or a hammer in forwarding the *profane work*; not even to have erected a bench,

" Where giggling girls and powder'd fops might ſit,
" And crowd the houſe for Satan's benefit †.

Even the accommodation of a roof was looked upon by the wary landlord as too great a hazard, where the owner was aſſured by his enthuſiaſtic paſtors, that the devil would be perſonified

* An. 10 Geo. II. c. 28. † *Epilogue to the Minor.*

perſonified beneath it, and that the whole would vaniſh away in a flaſh of fire.

THE belief of a poſſibility of this kind exiſted even in London the beginning of the preſent century, and, at this moment, I do not think it is totally exploded. In one of Rich's celebrated pantomimes, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, I believe the *Sorcerer*, a dance of infernals was to be exhibited. They were repreſented in dreſſes of black and red, with fiery eyes and ſnaky locks, and garniſhed with every appendage of horror. They were twelve in number. In the middle of their performance, while they were intent upon the figure in which they had been completely practiſed, an actor of ſome humour, who had been accommodated with a ſpare dreſs for the occaſion, appeared among them. He was, if poſſible, more terrific than the reſt; and ſeemed to the beholders as deſigned by the conductor for the principal fiend. His fellow-furies took the alarm; they knew he did not belong to them, and they judged him an infernal in earneſt; their fears were excited; a general panic ſucceeded, and the whole group fled different ways; ſome to their dreſſing-

rooms, and others through the ſtreets to their own homes, in order to avoid the deſtruction which they believed was coming upon them, for the profane mockery they had been guilty of. The ODD DEVIL was *non inventus.* He took himſelf inviſibly away, thro' fears of another kind. He was, however, ſeen by many, in imagination, to fly through the roof of the houſe, and they fancied themſelves almoſt ſuffocated with the ſtench he had left behind.

THE confuſion of the audience is ſcarcely to be conceived. They retired to their families, informing them of this ſuppoſed appearance of the devil, with many of his additional frolicks in the exploit. And ſo thoroughly was its reality believed, that every official explanation that could be made the following day, could not entirely do away the idea. I myſelf have gone purpoſely, more than once, before I was convinced of the fact, to ſee if I could trace the repairs of the end of the houſe that had been carried away by a waft of the devil's tail.

AN explanation of the above circumſtance I had from Mr Rich, in the preſence of his friend

friend Bencraft, the contriver, if not the actor, of it, who deſigned it only as an innocent frolick to confuſe the dancers, without adverting to the ſerious conſequences that might enſue.

THIS rooted prejudice againſt the ſons of Theſpis, as it was ſtronger in Scotland than in her ſiſter kingdom, ſo it there more powerfully operated againſt the propagating of ſtage exhibitions, and more forcibly retarded the growth of the drama.

IN England, dramatic performances were exhibited in churches on Sundays *, till the end of the ſixteenth century: But in Scotland they were anathematiſed immediately after the Reformation †.

WHEN, upon the reſtoration of Charles the Second, his brother, the Duke of York, took up his reſidence in Holyrood-houſe, a party of performers, from what was called the Duke's Company, by his Highneſs's command, attended him thither.

IN

* *Warton's Antient Poetry*, Vol. I. p. 141.
† *Book of Univerſal Kirk*. p. 145, 161.

In a prologue to the Univerſity of Oxford, written by Dryden, he humorouſly apologizes for the company of performers on that occaſion being ſo thin.

> Our brethren have from Thames to Tweed departed,
> And of our ſiſters all the kinder hearted,
> To *Edenborough* gone, or coacht, or carted *.

From this period, through the whole of Queen Anne's reign, till after the troubles in 1715, no theatrical repreſentations were attempted in Scotland.

The firſt adventurer we hear of, was Signiora Violante, an Italian, who, with ſome of her countrymen, returning from Dublin by the way of Port-Patrick, paid a viſit to Edinburgh. She exhibited feats of ſtrength, poſtures, and tumbling, in a room in Carrubber's Cloſe, which was fitted up for the purpoſe.

The ſucceſs ſhe met with on this occaſion, encouraged her to collect a company of comedians in England, with which ſhe returned to her former quarters in Edinburgh.

ITINERANT

* *Dryden's Poems*, Vol. III. p. 209. The time of the Duke's viſit to Edinburgh.

ITINERANT performers, after this, exhibited in Merchant Taylors Hall, ſo called from its belonging to the corporation of that name. The prices there were, for the pit and boxes, 2s. 6d. gallery, 1s. 6d. The houſe would hold at theſe rates from L.40 to L.45.

FROM the violence of the oppoſers, and the exertions of the ſupporters of the ſtage *, Merchant Taylors Hall was ſoon perceived to be too ſmall, on particular occaſions, to contain the audiences that applied for admiſſion. Oppoſition generally exalts and renders popular the object it is meant to depreſs.

SOME performers, with Mrs Ward, a favourite actreſs, at their head, at length found means to procure ſubſcriptions towards the erection of a regular theatre: And the tradeſmen, encouraged by the promiſe of a partial payment, were induced to proceed upon credit, on an aſſurance of being paid out of the future profits.

BY theſe means a new theatre was erected on

* *Arnot's Hiſtory of Edinburgh*, p. 368.

on the ſouth ſide of the Canongate*. The firſt ſtone was laid in Auguſt 1746, by Mr Lacy Ryan, then belonging to Covent-Garden theatre. I was favoured with his acquaintance. He bore a moſt reſpectable character as a man, and was a good actor.

He had a particularity of voice, from an accident he had formerly received in his mouth †, not pleaſing to a ſtranger. On his firſt *entrée* in Cato, his mode of pronouncing

" The dawn is overcaſt, the morning lowers,
" And heavily in clouds brings on the day—
" The great, th' important day, big with the fate
" Of Cato and of Rome——"

gave an unfavourable impreſſion to a perſon unfamiliariſed with his tones; but before the end of the play, that peculiarity was forgot.

* The Canongate theatre, at 2s. 6d. 1s. 6d. and 1s. held from L.60 to L.65. At Lancaſhire's benefit, I remember there was upwards of L.70; but the wings and ſtage were ſo crowded, that, when I came on in the character of *Hotſpur*, to encounter the *Prince of Wales*, we had not room to ſtand at ſwords length.

† As he was returning from the theatre, after one of his evening's performance, he was attacked by a ſtreet robber, and, making reſiſtance, received two piſtol balls in his mouth, which ſhattered his jaw. After the ſhot, by the help of a lamp, the villain recognized Mr Ryan, begged his pardon for the miſtake, and made off.——He was firſt noticed in *Marcus* in Cato, which was brought out in 1712.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Tenures of the theatres in Europe—Revival of ſtage plays in England—Origin of the patent in Covent Garden—Of the theatrical property in Edinburgh—Mr Lee proprietor and manager—Lords of Seſſion and other gentlemen proprietors—Mr Callender their manager—Mr Digges and Mrs Ward there—Tragedy of Douglas brought out—Mr Love manager—Mr Jackſon's appearance in Edinburgh—Mrs Bellamy there.

THE building of the Canongate theatre, though ſtill without the ſanction of law, and in defiance of an act of Parliament *, was the firſt regular theatrical eſtabliſhment in Scotland. From the original proprietors, therefore, of this houſe, the rights of property, belonging to the preſent Theatre Royal, took their riſe; together with the privilege of exhibiting ſtage repreſentations under the cover of two expreſs acts. The one †, extending

* 10 Geo. II. c. 28. † 7 Geo. III. c. 27.

the limits of the liberties of the city, and empowering the King to grant a patent to authoriſe the acting of plays therein. The other * reſtraining magiſtrates from licencing itinerant actors within twenty-four miles of the cities of London, Weſtminſter, and Edinburgh.

THE heritable right, therefore, of the property, with that of the proprietors thereto belonging, of the theatre of Edinburgh, thus fortified and extended, muſt proceed by lineal deſcent, or by purchaſe, to future heritors, without a poſſibility of a diminution of its powers or apurtenances, unleſs by the will and conſent of the owner or owners thereof.

THE theatres through Europe were originally erected upon the ſame precarious footing, and are held by a ſimilar tenure. The whole expence attending their building and ſupport, were, with very few exceptions, left to the fortunes and induſtry of private individuals. Theſe men, therefore, have been every where permitted to manage and conduct

* 28 Geo. III. 1788. See Appendix, No. IV.

duct their own property, like other ſubjects, under regulations conſonant to the police of the reſpective countries.

THEY were the fabrications of adventurers, and remain in the perſons of their ſucceſſors, their heirs, or aſſigns.

THE theatres of Paris aroſe from a religious ſociety, termed, *Confrerie de la Paſſion.* The brotherhood repreſented ſacred ſubjects*; and when theſe pieces came afterwards to give place to modern comedy, the firſt religious actors retained, notwithſtanding, the property and the licence from the crown.

BY them the whole was at laſt conveyed to the company of the *Hotel de Burgogne*, in conſideration of a certain annuity or annualrent. Moliere founded the other Pariſian company, and the proprietors of the preſent theatres of Paris are the lineal ſucceſſors of thoſe two by

* ——— Une troupe groſſiere
En public a Paris y monta la premiere,
Et ſottement zélé en ſa ſimpliceté,
Joua les Saints, la Vierge, et Dieu, par pieté.
Vide *Boileau l'Art Poetique, Chaul.* 3me et les notes.
Voltaire vie de Moliere.
Le grand Encyclopedie, voce *Comedien.*

inheritance, or purchaſe, without interruption.

UPON the revival of the ſtage in England, plays were introduced at Court. In the days of Elizabeth, James, and Charles the Firſt, the exhibitions were attended with great expence. The ſcenery and architecture of Ben Johnſon's maſques, were deſigned by Sir Inigo Jones. The actors were the houſehold, and hence derived the title of *His Majeſty's Servants* *.

AT the reſtoration, Sir William Davenant, and Sir Harry Kelligrew, undertook to build and decorate a houſe, entirely at *their own expence*, for the entertainment of the public as well as the Court. Therefore it was, that Charles the Second granted a patent to them and their heirs and aſſignees, for ever. This patent is the authority of Covent Garden at this moment.

WHATEVER intereſt the public may have, and the people contend for, in the *election of their clergy*,

* "They had each ten yards of ſcarlet cloth, with a proper quantity of lace, allowed them for liveries; and in their warrants from the Lord Chamberlain, were ſtiled *Gentlemen of the Great Chamber.*" *Cibber's Apology*, p. 54.

clergy, yet ſo ſacred is property, that the rights of *patronage* has continued for ages, and ſtill exiſts in the ſucceſſors of thoſe who originally endowed the church, or beſtowed property upon it. I muſt apologize for making uſe of this illuſtration in ſpeaking upon the preſent ſubject; but the juſtice and aptneſs of it, it is hoped, will obtain my excuſe.

How far I ſhall be able to keep to the ſimilitude, in the claim that I now make to the right of the theatrical property of Edinburgh, to the powers of its inherent appendages, and to the ſanction of the public, let the following progreſſive narrative decide.

UNDER the firm of its firſt profeſſional aſſociation, the buſineſs of the new theatre in the Canongate was carried on till the year 1752. During that period, ſeveral performers from London, ſome of them of eſtabliſhed merit, paid occaſional viſits to Edinburgh. Among theſe was Mr Lee, who poſſeſſed a conſiderable ſhare of dramatic abilities, and was riſing very faſt, in his eſtimation, as an actor. Lee, who had quarrelled with Mr Garrick, was deſirous of procuring an eſtabliſhment in Scotland,

Scotland, and came down to Edinburgh with that intention.

MANY of the original claimants upon the theatrical property in the Canongate were dead. Mr Lee, who was now become a favourite with the town, found it no very difficult matter to conclude an agreement with the remaining ones, of whom he purchaſed the houſe for L. 648, and annuities of L. 100 a-year to the ſurviving leſſees.

LEE being unable to make good his contracts with reſpect to pecuniary matters, the theatre became the property of ſome of the Lords of Seſſion *, and other gentlemen, who interpoſed their intereſt, and made ſome money-advancements on the occaſion.

THE motive for the interference of theſe gentlemen was doubtleſs of a public nature, and that of a laudable kind; an intention, as they expected, of bringing the then theatre into credit, and of raiſing it to that degree of reſpect

* Lord Elibank, Lord Alemoor, Lord Monboddo, Lord Ankerville, Mr Baron Stewart, Mr Alexander Maxwell, Mr Callender, and others.

reſpect which their wiſhes and their ideas had formed.

Mr Callender, a merchant in Edinburgh, who was concerned in the undertaking, was inveſted with the management, for the behoof of himſelf and the gentlemen concerned.

Mr Digges, who was then a favourite in Dublin as an actor, and who had been formerly known in Edinburgh in private life, was, with Mrs Ward, engaged at the head of the company.

The tragedy of Douglas ſoon after made its appearance *, and was a great temporary relief to the finances of the houſe. It will for ever be a monument much to the honour of the poetical genius of this country, as well as a laſting credit to the theatre at large.

The

* December 14. 1756.

The characters were thus originally filled:

Men.	*Women.*
Douglas, — Digges.	Lady Randolph, Mrs Ward.
Lord Randolph, Younger.	Anna, — Mrs Hopkins.
Glenalvon, — Love.	
Norval, — Hayman.	

THE finances, however, even thus under the inſpection of one of their own body, did not anſwer the expectation of the new proprietors. Mr Callender retired with loſs, and Meſſrs Love and Beatt ſucceeded to the management.

UNDER their theatrical reign, I made my firſt appearance in Edinburgh *.

BESIDES Mr Love, who was acting manager, there were in the company, that ſeaſon, Meſſrs Stamper, Griffith, Parſons, Lancaſhire, and myſelf. Mrs Mozeen was the heroine.

THOUGH I had previouſly reſolved to ſay as little as poſſible reſpecting myſelf, eſpecially where it does not immediately lead towards the illucidation or the promotion of the main buſineſs in queſtion, yet as this was an epocha of my life, to which I cannot recur without ſenſations of various tendencies, I find it impoſſible to paſs over ſo momentous a period of my exiſtence in total ſilence.

I WAS uſhered before the public with a prologue,

* Saturday, January 9. 1762.

prologue*, written, and intended to have been ſpoken, by myſelf, previous to my appearance in the character of *Douglas*, then my favourite part; but as it gave place to that of *Oroonoko*, for reaſons which the reader will quickly be appriſed of, the ſpeaking an addreſs, anterior to that character, was judged both inconvenient and improper; and the manager being likewiſe apprehenſive of truſting a charge ſo conſequential to one ſo intereſted and unexperienced, the egotiſms were taken out; and a change being made from the firſt to the third perſon, Mr Love very kindly undertook it himſelf.

After that of *Oroonoko*, I appeared in the part of *Romeo*; and afterwards in ſeveral other capital characters, in the courſe of the ſeaſon, with equal ſucceſs.

On breakfaſting one morning, as uſual, with the manager, with a flattering exordium he aſſured me, that though he had conſtantly negatived my requeſt of appearing in *Douglas*, he had been inſtigated thereto, through a real regard for my intereſt, as he had con-

* See Appendix, No. V.

ſtantly looked upon the attempt as a hazardous undertaking: For as no one had ever performed the part before an Edinburgh audience, but Mr Digges, he remained ſtill freſh in their memories; and his excellence in the character muſt bear hard upon the moſt ſtrenuous efforts of a young actor, labouring under prepoſſeſſions not eaſily removed. But, now that I had ſtood in parts of infinitely more conſequence in the dramatic liſt, and that with a marked and decided approbation of the public, he thought I might *venture upon Douglas*.

He was ſure of my concurrence. The play was therefore given out, and advertiſed for the next repreſentation.

In the morning, I had a meſſage from Mr Love, more early than uſual. I attended his ſummons. After ſome heſitation, I was informed that Mr Digges was arrived in Edinburgh. My reply was, that "I was glad of it, as he would have an opportunity, for the firſt time, of ſeeing that favourite character exhibited by another."

Mr

Mr Love. "That is very true, Sir; and it may yield you ſome temporary gratification in the performance: But what will be the conſequence? My advice is, that you ſhould defer it, as it will certainly be one of Mr Digges' firſt performances, and compariſons may be unfavourable.—Shall I order the play-bills to be ſuppreſſed?"

Mr Jackſon. (With great deference.) "Whatever you think right, I ſhall certainly concur in."

Mr Love. "I was certain you would ſee this in the ſame light with myſelf. I ſhall therefore order the bills to be taken down."

He had the door in his hand, when I thus accoſted him:—"Sir, I have not the leaſt objection to your putting a ſtop to the repreſentation of the play of *Douglas*, if you think it for *your* advantage; certain I am that it is not for *mine*: and mark the conſequence—if I am not permitted to perform *Douglas* to-morrow night, as advertiſed, I never will appear again, in any other part, upon the Edinburgh ſtage.

"For I have ſet my *fame* upon the caſt;
"And I will ſtand the hazard of the dye."

I REMINDED him, that I had toiled in the vineyard through the whole of the early and dead part of the ſeaſon, and that now the vintage was arrived, I hoped to pull a ripe bunch, as well as a tranſient viſitor, who came but for a day; and who, the moment the grapes were gathered, would retire, to leave the labour to another *.

MR LOVE, with ſome ſigns of embaraſſment, apologiſed, aſſuring me, that he had ſuggeſted nothing but with a ſincere attachment to my intereſt. He candidly confeſſed, that Mr Digges had made a point with him to defer the play: "But," ſays he, "as you ſeem ſo determined, I ſhall drop the ſubject, and the bills ſhall remain;" at the ſame time, he expreſſed himſelf apprehenſive of the conſequences, both for himſelf and me.

MR

* I performed, from the 9th of January to the 30th of April 1767, *Oroonoko*, thrice—*Romeo*, four times—*Earl of Eſſex*, thrice—*Oſmyn*, Mourning Bride, *Don Felix*, Wonder, twice—*Jaffier*, twice—*Douglas*, four times—*Caſtalio*, twice—*Young Bevil*, *Buckingham*, Henry VIII. *Hamlet*, *Oſman*, Zara, *Lord Hardy*, Funeral, *Tancred*, *Jaques*, *Juba*, *Proſpero*—and ſpoke two prologues, one to the Drummer, or the Haunted Houſe *, the other before the maſons play, which was thirty-four appearances, all excepting two, entire new ſtudy.

* See Appendix, No. VI.

Mr Hume, the author of the play, paid particular attention to the rehearſals; and it was performed to a crowded audience.

Mr Digges came early to the houſe, and placed himſelf very conſpicuouſly in the centre of the third row of the pit from the orcheſtra.

After the curtain dropped, Mr Hume repaired to the front of the houſe, and, among others, aſſured Mr Digges that he had ſcarcely ever been ſo well ſatisfied with the performance of the part of *Douglas*.

In a very ſhort time after, the play was repeated, and Mr Digges appeared, for the firſt time, in the Old Shepherd. Another difficulty here ſtarted. He inſiſted upon having his name for *Old Norval* at the head of the bill. I refuſed to yield to him the poſt of honour. At laſt the matter was compromiſed, and the firſt line ſtood thus:

Douglas, Mr Jackson—Old Shepherd, *(Firſt time)* Mr Digges.

I performed afterwards ſeveral parts in the ſame pieces with Mr Digges: *Jaffier* to his

his *Pierre*, *Juba* to his *Cato*; and continued, if not upon terms of the cloſeſt intimacy, yet with thoſe of the higheſt complaiſance and apparent cordiality; the above ſlight contention, on our firſt acquaintance, having in no wiſe operated ſo untowardly as to diſturb or impede the ſucceeding buſineſs of the ſeaſon.

It ſerved, however, in my mind, for which reaſon it is here inſerted, more forcibly to attach my affections to an audience, for this ſtrong and repeated inſtance of their partiality and kindneſs, who ſtill continued to ſhower their favours upon me, on all ſucceeding occaſions, for which I am bound to yield them the fulleſt tribute of gratitude, and which I ſhall ever acknowledge with the higheſt ſenſe of duty and reſpect.

Towards the cloſe of the ſeaſon, Mrs Bellamy was introduced. Her engagement, according to the advertiſement, was for four nights, for which the boxes had been previouſly taken *. I was retained on the occaſion; and

* "The following *four* plays *only* will be performed ſucceſſively at the theatre in the Canongate:—Tancred and Sigismunda,

and had the high honour (as I then deemed it) of performing twice with that celebrated actreſs; *Caſtalio* with her *Monimia*, and *Romeo* to her *Juliet*.

I REMEMBER her finding fault with my approaching too near her in the balcony ſcene. I apologiſed, by obſerving, that it was impoſſible to refrain from even ſcaling the wall, if acceſſible, when ſo charming an object was in view. In this I judged I had nature for my guide.

IT certainly is much to the intereſt of a *Juliet*, that the *Romeo* ſhould ſtand at ſome diſtance, and as near the lamps as the form of

SIGISMUNDA, RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE, JANE SHORE, and the PROVOKED HUSBAND; in which a *Gentlewoman* will appear, for the firſt time, on the ſtage in this kingdom, in the character of *Sigiſmunda*, *Eſtiſania*, *Alicia*, and *Lady Townly*. Tancred and Sigiſmunda (the firſt play) will be performed on Wedneſday, the 5th of May, with an occaſional prologue, to be ſpoken by Mr Digges." In the hiſtory of her life, Mrs Bellamy ſays (v. IV. p. 44.) "Eight nights were to be the limited number of my performing, and the laſt was to be for my benefit;" which, I preſume, was the caſe; for it was her ſeventh night (Thurſday) when I appeared with her in *Romeo*, and on the Saturday, May the 15th, ſhe played *Lady Macbeth*.

of the houſe would allow; for by that means the lady is enabled to aſſume a more graceful poſition, and to preſent her figure more fully to the audience. But this is a ſituation detrimental to her lover; as it exhibits, at moſt, his profile to one part of the audience, and his back to the other. I was, however, at that period, too little acquainted with the arcana of theatrical buſineſs, called, in the cant phraſe, *ſtage trick*, to have practiſed this as a premeditated manœuvre. I was alſo poſſeſſed of too much gallantry to have taken a wilful advantage of a lady, particularly one ſo celebrated in her profeſſion, and whom I ſhould have been proud to oblige, even by ſtanding upon my head, had ſhe deigned to make the requeſt. It was, nevertheleſs, deemed intentional in me at the time; became the ground-work of a ſerious complaint againſt me, and was the cauſe of my not continuing the next ſeaſon in Edinburgh;—a meaſure which both my inclination and my intereſt moſt ſtrongly prompted me to embrace; and which Mr Garrick, though his theatre was open to me, recommended as the moſt effectual means to procure me a neceſſary degree of confidence, and experimental knowledge.

Mr

Mr Dowson gave me a very preſſing invitation to remain in Edinburgh another year; and made me an offer of an addition of a pound a-week to my ſalary; but I was prepoſſeſſed, that as Mr Digges and Mrs Bellamy were to continue in Scotland that ſeaſon, my ſituation would be rendered not very pleaſing.

This year, 1763, Mr Digges changed his theatrical name; the principal characters, thro' the ſeaſon, in the play-bills, being announced to be performed by *Mr* and *Mrs Bellamy*.

Mrs Bellamy's anecdotes, on her jaunt to Scotland, are delineated in the memoirs of that lady, to which the reader is referred.

On my arrival in London, I procured engagements for Meſſrs Love and Parſons, with Mr Garrick, at Drury Lane.

The former, with whom I was connected in the cloſeſt ties of friendſhip, was in private life a moſt reſpectable and worthy character. His real name was Dance, the ſon of Dance the architect to the city of London. He was

a good ſound actor, and confeſſedly the beſt *Falſtaff* ſince Quin.

Mr Parsons performed the *Miſer* that ſeaſon in Edinburgh. He has ever ſince ſuſtained a capital line of characters in Drury Lane.

Mr Griffith acted the fops and fine gentlemen. He was many years afterwards manager of the Norwich company, which he ſupported with much credit.

Mr Lancashire poſſeſſed a great fund of dry humour, and filled Shuter's line in low comedy. He was a great favourite with the public. He kept a tavern firſt in the Canongate, and afterwards in the New Town. He drank and joked with his cuſtomers; laughed and grew fat; and, at length, died reſpected by many, and with the good word of all.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Anecdotes of the Reverend Mr Jackſon, A. B.—Of Archbiſhop Blackburne—Election matters—Anecdotes of the late Earl of Thanet and Lady Bingley—Of the late worthy Archbiſhop Drummond—His ſentiments reſpecting the ſtage.

My engagements, and purſuits in London, for the five years ſucceeding, as they are quite unconnected with theatrical concerns of Edinburgh, ſhall be paſſed over in ſilence. One circumſtance only, as it redounds to the honour of a Right Honourable and Reverend Prelate, and a native of Scotland, I feel an involuntary impulſe to make known; ſincerely truſting, that ſo rich a ſample of benignity, condeſcenſion, and Chriſtian charity, will not only attract the attention of his brethren, the clergy of North Britain, but ſtand forward as an example worthy of their imitation.

My father was a clergyman of the church of England. He held two livings in the dioceſe of York; one for life, in the gift of the

Earl of Thanet, to whom he had likewiſe the honour of being chaplain. The other during the pleaſure only of his Dioceſan *.

At that period, the parties of Whig and Tory ran prodigiouſly high. The Earl was a ſtaunch Tory; the Archbiſhop as violent on the contrary ſide.

An oppoſition for a member for the county took place, in the room of Lord Morpeth, who was choſen at the general election 1741, and died in Auguſt that year. Nearly at the ſame time, if not by the ſame poſt, my father received two letters, to the following purport:—

Sir,

The election is approaching; as you value my future favour, you will vote for Mr Fox.

Groſvenor Square. THANET.

Sir,

At the enſuing election, I expect you will give your vote and intereſt to Mr Turner.

Biſhopthorp. EBOR.

The Reverend Mr Jackſon, of Kieghley.

So

* Lancelot Blackburne.

So ſituated, it was both my father's inclination and his intereſt to remain neuter. He applied to both parties, earneſtly ſoliciting ſo to do; but no excuſe would be admitted. He that is not for us is againſt us, was the mutual concluſion, and he muſt declare. His *dilemma* was obviouſly diſtreſſing. If he voted for one, he was to looſe the favour of his patron, and the next preſentation of a valuable rectory, which he had long been promiſed. If for the other, he was inſtantly to give up the living he held at pleaſure, and muſt never more expect preferment in the church.

THUS reduced to the neceſſity of declaring himſelf, he followed his natural intereſt, which accorded likewiſe with his principles, and voted for the friend of his patron.

THE Archbiſhop ſent him an inſtant order to remove; and, *with his own hand*, placed a mark againſt his name in the court books, that no favour ſhould ever be granted him. This injunction did not, however, long remain in force, as His Grace died in London, 1743.

MY father, ſolacing himſelf with a good conſcience, and the comfort of having acted

as

as he ought, retired to his other living, which, though ſmall, he had the comfort of knowing, that nothing but death could take from him.

By the intereſt of Mr Fox, and with the conſent of the Earl of Thanet, he removed to Doncaſter, where his emoluments were ſuppoſed to amount to more than an equivalent for what he had been deprived of. It was there I entered upon the firſt rudiments of my education; having been intended for the church. But my road through life has been by a different rout, which, I will venture to affirm, was occaſioned from the effects of Lord Thanet's diſpleaſure. For had I been permitted to continue in the habits of friendſhip with the ſon, I know not what connections might have been formed, that would have enabled me to have moved in a very different ſphere.

From Doncaſter my father was again recalled to his living; and, upon non-compliance, was given to underſtand, that his ſtipend would be retained. This, his Lordſhip alledged, was a meaſure he was under the neceſſity of enforcing, at the requeſt of the pariſh-

parishioners, who insisted, that their pastor should reside among them, though his absence had been ably supplied by Doctor Dehane, who bore an unexceptionable character, and had been approved of by themselves.

My father remonstrated; and, I remember, went to London on the occasion: but, finding the Earl immoveable, of two evils he chose, as he thought, the least. He obeyed the summons, returned to his cure, and consigned me to the care of his brother, who resided upon a small paternal estate, afterwards inherited by me. It was in the neighbourhood of Kirkby Lonsdale, in Westmoreland, where, at the grammar school, I finished my study of the classics.

On calling, as usual, at the castle*, for that part of his annual stipend which was due from the Earl of Thanet, he was told by the steward, that orders had been left by his Lordship that it should not be paid. This information surprised him not a little, particularly as he had complied with the Earl's request. But what was his astonishment to be farther

* Skipton Castle in Craven.

farther acquainted, that his Lordſhip would be much pleaſed with his reſignation.

WHETHER Lord Thanet had taken offence at the ſuppoſed reluctance of Mr Jackſon to ſtep forward on that occaſion, which proceeded neither from a difference of opinion in politics, or a want of attention to the intereſt of his patron, but merely from the critical ſituation in which he was placed; for I knew his heart; or from what other cauſe his friendſhip had been alienated from my father, has never yet tranſpired; for no cauſe would his Lordſhip ever aſſign, though frequently entreated by Mr Jackſon ſo to do. He perſiſted in this reſolution to the day of his death; which deprived my father of twenty pounds of his annual income for twenty years, and me of a more finiſhed education, with Lord Tufton, at Geneva, a youth of my own age, as had been previouſly ſettled by our fathers, while they were upon terms of intimacy.

ON the approach of my firſt benefit at Drury Lane, I was adviſed to make my ſituation known to Lord Thanet, and Lady Bingley,

Bingley, whoſe huſband was the Mr Fox, ſince Lord Bingley, for whoſe intereſt my father had been ſo great a ſufferer.

I HAD built much upon their favour and protection. The one had ſerved me upon her lap, with the choiceſt dainties at her table: with the other I was acquainted when a boy. He had often blamed the obſtinacy of the Earl, in refuſing juſtice to my father: "But, oh!" ſaid he frequently to him, "when I come to be Lord, you ſhall not ſeek a ſecond time for redreſs." From theſe circumſtances, I thought I had only to make the application to obtain all I wiſhed; but my hopes, as they often have been, were placed upon a ſandy foundation.

I ADDRESSED a very polite card to each of theſe noble perſonages, requeſting their patronage, and ſignifying that I would do myſelf the honour of waiting on them perſonally for the anſwers. I was informed by Lady Bingley's gentlewoman, that "her Ladyſhip could not be ſeen. It will be needleſs for you, Sir, to call again. I read your card, and am ordered by my Lady to acquaint

you, that her Ladyſhip never encourages any actors benefit." She could laviſh hundreds, however, upon thoſe of Italian ſingers.

LORD THANET's valet, with great politeneſs, was ſorry to acquaint me, that his Lord was that morning engaged, and, more unfortunately ſo, on my night, or otherwiſe he would have attended. From himſelf he took the liberty of adviſing me, as I valued my own intereſt, not to inſinuate that there were any arrears due from his Lordſhip to my father. "You know, Sir, it is no compulſatory matter, and would therefore be better dropped; and beſides, take care how you touch my Lord's character, for it will come round to his ear, and the conſequence to you may be unpleaſant."

I LEFT Cavendiſh and Groſvenor Squares in no very pleaſing turn of temper; returning to my apartment with my pride not a little lowered, and my feelings hurt.

I DID not, however, follow the lacquey's advice. Indignation and reſentment were afloat, and I meditated an inſtant aſſertion of right.

right. In ſpite of the ſuperiority of riches, rank, and privilege, I determined to enter the liſts with Lord Thanet; for having been ſo lately a *Prince*, I had leſs heſitation in contending with a *Lord*; and

"Who could reſiſt me in a parent's cauſe?"

I DREW out a haſty memorial, in terms ſtrongly pointed: they were, however, ſomewhat ſoftened by the advice and correction of Mr Garrick. The coolneſs of his experience meliorated the heat of youth. I had three copies prepared; incloſed one to the Archbiſhop of York, another for Sir Anthony Abdy, Lord Thanet's agent, and the laſt, as my dernier reſort, was to be delivered to the King the next levee day. This honourary trouble was rendered unneceſſary, as the ſequel will explain.

THE two firſt procured me an almoſt immediate interview. The one was ſhort, but ſatisfactory. Sir Anthony Abdy was much of the gentleman, affable and polite. He profeſſed being ignorant of the matter; and was certain the noble Lord, for whom he acted, would not knowingly perſiſt in ſuch an ap-

parent piece of injuſtice—ſuppoſed, that in ſome circumſtances, I might be miſtaken—that the paper contained ſtrong charges—hoped, for my own ſake, I had well conſidered the allegations I had given in—and adviſed me to take no farther ſteps, till he ſhould ſpeak with Lord Thanet on the ſubject. I acquieſced, and took my leave.

My viſit to his Grace of York was of longer duration, more ſucceſsful in its conſequences, and ſo flattering in its tendency, both to myſelf perſonally, and to the profeſſion in which I was embarked, as to prove the ſole creation of this chapter.

I found his Grace at breakfaſt in his ſtudy, alone, I preſume intentionally ſo. His perſon was commanding, and his manner and deportment ſuch as I expected to behold in one who could be deemed worthy to fill ſo dignified a ſtation.

After deſiring me, with great complacency, to be ſeated, "You are," ſays his Grace, "I preſume, Mr Jackſon?"—"Yes, my Lord."—"You reſide in the Temple?"—"I do,

"I do, my Lord."—"You belong to the law?"—"No, Sir."—"I judged ſo by the place of your reſidence."——No anſwer from me to this delicate mode of enforcing the queſtion.

"YOUR father now lives at Beenham in Berks?"—"He does, my Lord. Having long and frequently applied for the payment of his arrears; being a widower, loneſome, and unpleaſantly ſituated, through party feuds, with ſome of his pariſhioners, whom he ſuſpected, and, I believe, very juſtly, of being the cauſe of Lord Thanet's original diſguſt, he was deſirous of a change of ſituation: He wiſhed alſo to be nearer me. Leaving, therefore, his own church under the care of an approved curate, he accepted himſelf of that of Beenham. Doctor Stackhouſe wrote his celebrated hiſtory of the Bible in the houſe where my father now dwells."

"I HAVE a memorial from you," replied his Grace, "reſpecting your father, of a very ſerious nature. Great reflections muſt either fall upon you, Sir, or the noble Lord complained of. I have no reaſon to ſuſpect the truth of your aſſertions; but I ſent for you to know

know more fully from yourſelf the particulars of this charge, which, if ſubſtantiated, is certainly an act of very great oppreſſion, and, indeed, ingratitude, particularly in the old Lord."

I RELATED every thing I knew concerning the matter minutely, with many aggravations too complicated and numerous to mention here. His Grace liſtened to me with great complacency and attention, and promiſed to make immediate enquiry into the facts I had ſtated, upon the ſpot, where, he ſaid, he ſhould be on a viſitation to that part of his dioceſe; and aſſured me, that he would make a viſit on purpoſe to my father's pariſh.

I WAS upon my legs, and on the point of departing, when I obſerved to his Grace, that when he aſked if I belonged to the law, I had continued ſilent. I now informed his Grace, that I had no intention of concealing my profeſſion, nor was I in the leaſt aſhamed of making the declaration; but that being apprehenſive, had I told it immediately, my cauſe might have been thereby injured, as I feared his Grace might have been ſo prejudiced,

diced, as not to have liſtened to me with the ſame attention as if I had been in any other line of buſineſs.—"I am, my Lord, upon the ſtage."—A pauſe for a moment.

SIR,

I KNOW no diſtinction of perſons. I reſpect worth wherever it is found. Goodneſs may adorn the breaſt of an actor as well as that of a divine. And I ſee no juſt reaſon why I ſhould diſcredit or diſregard you more for being on the ſtage, than if you were in the pulpit, provided you have kept your character. I ſhall enquire into your conduct, and if I find it ſuch as I can ſanction with credit, you ſhall always have my patronage and ſupport.

"BUT come, Sir," continued his Grace, "if you are not in a hurry, let me aſk you a queſtion or two." He rang for chocolate, which he deſired I would take, and proceeded. "You ſay you are on the ſtage; what parts have you done?" I told him it was my firſt ſeaſon: That I had, notwithſtanding, appeared in *Oroonoko*, *Romeo*, *Moneſes*, *Lord Guilford Dudley*, *Polidore*, &c.

"I AM

"I AM glad," ſays his Grace, "you ſtand ſo forward. I ſhall ſpeak to Mr Garrick concerning you: In the mean time, make my compliments to him, and tell him, I expect he will uſe you well. I do not go to the theatre myſelf; but let me know when your night comes, and I ſhall ſend my family." His Grace ſaw me to the door, and told the porter, that whenever I called, he ſhould be at home. He then again wiſhed me well;

"Vow'd me aſſiſtance, and perform'd it too."

BY the interpoſition of his Grace, the Earl of Thanet was induced to renounce his error. The arrears were paid me by Sir Anthony Abdy. The ſtipend, in future, was ſettled upon a landed eſtate; and my father had a diſpenſation to continue at Beenham for life, ſtill holding his living in Yorkſhire; being excuſed from attending upon viſitations, or any other extraordinary occaſion.

SUCH were the effects of the benign auſpices and ſucceſsful exertions of the Right Honourable and Right Reverend ROBERT DRUMMOND, Archbiſhop of York, the brother of the

the late, and father of the preſent, Earl of Kinnoul.

And thus was a worthy member of the church releaſed from the hand of oppreſſion, and rendered happy: but happineſs on earth is rarely perfect, and never certain. No ſooner had he acquired the ſummit of his wiſhes in this life, than he was ſummoned to another. He caught a fever at the age of ſeventy-five, and expired in my arms; having been fifty-two of thoſe years in holy orders, with unſullied honour and unblemiſhed heart. At his particular deſire, he was depoſited at the eaſt end of the church of Beenham, by the ſide of his predeceſſor, the late Reverend Doctor Stackhouſe.

Requieſcat in pace.

SECT. IV.

The reſignation of Mr Love—Mr John Dowſon and Mr David Beatt managers—Diſputes with Mr Stayley—Riots in conſequence—Demolition of the interior parts of the theatre—Anecdotes of Mrs Ward, Mrs Baker, and Mr Younger—Theatre, property, and patent bought by Mr Roſs—The preſent Theatre Royal built—Mr Foote manager—Meſſrs Digges and Bland—Corri—Wilkinſon—The theatre and its appendages purchaſed by Mr Jackſon.

THE reſignation of Mr Love uſhered in Mr John Dowſon, of Newcaſtle, to the notice of the public; who became copartner with Mr Beatt in the management, together with the proprietory of the wardrobe, moveables, and old debts.

THIS gentleman, without any theatrical experience, or the knowledge of ſtage buſineſs, ſtept forward as the joint conductor of an undertaking for which he was obviouſly unfit.

unfit. He poſſeſſed one qualification, indeed, on many occaſions neceſſary, the command of ſome ready money. This, however, was not long in running through, and he conſequently found it adviſeable to ſell out.

I WAS then, as I had frequently been, in Edinburgh, though not in my profeſſional line, and became the purchaſer. The theatre in the Canongate, with all its apurtenances, for the ſum of L. 1400, was inſtantly to be put into my poſſeſſion; the rights of the gentlemen proprietors, who were to join in the conveyance, alſo included; together with an obligation from them to ſecure to me the property, and the right of performance in Edinburgh, by a patent to be procured immediately, at their inſtance, but at my expence.

EVERY thing was finally adjuſted between the parties, and the writings were to have been ſigned the next day.

THE preceeding evening I viſited the theatre, where, in one of the boxes, I had an unexpected interview with an honourable perſonage, unneceſſary, on this occaſion, to be

introduced, which overturned the whole buſineſs. I wrote a card that night, intimating my reſolution of relinquiſhing my bargain; and determined, from that moment, to bid adieu to every connection with the ſtage for ever.

My declining this agreement proved not only a circumſtance, individually to me, of the utmoſt conſequence, but a matter of import to the intereſts of thoſe concerned in the Canongate theatre, and the community of the city of Edinburgh at large.

A Mr Stayley, an itinerant actor, had found the means, by ingratiating himſelf into the favour of ſeveral individuals, to procure an intereſt, which he judged ſufficient to force for him an engagement upon the Edinburgh theatre; the managers, deeming his terms too high, having refuſed to admit him as a member of their company.

Mr Stayley, to a tincture of genius, had acquired a ſmattering of ſtage knowledge, which might have rendered him an uſeful member to a theatre; but a mediocrity in the

ſcience

ſcience did not ſuit his VAST IDEAS. He had adopted, in compliance with the taſte of his audience, a pompoſity in his pronunciation, and an eccentricity of tones, and mode of deportment, which, by a country audience, was pronounced *great acting*.

I ACCIDENTALLY ſaw him perform *Macbeth* at a provincial theatre. In the battle between him and *Macduff*, after fighting round each front wing, and having been ten times apparently run through the body, and twice down, he got up, and, ſtaggering towards the lamps, fell a third time; where, upon one knee, or writhing in different poſtures, he uttered a dying ſpeech of five-and-twenty lines, compoſed by himſelf, and, at length, expired amidſt a thunder of applauſe: And the bulk of the audience, retiring, pronounced him the firſt actor in the world.

HE had the art, for a time, to impoſe theſe extravagances, even upon ſome of the Edinburgh critics, as the ebullition of ſterling merit; in conſequence of which, a very few nights after I had taken that haſty reſolution before recited, ſome of the moſt violent of his partizans

partizans aſſembled in the pit, and called for the manager. The ſum of their requiſition was, that Mr Stayley ſhould be engaged. He was in waiting in one of the upper boxes; and was, at the deſire of the party, with the forced conſent of the managers, admitted upon the ſtage to tell *his own ſtory*.

He advanced forward to the audience, in order to deliver, obviouſly, a prepared ſpeech. "I am proud," ſays he, "and ſorry thus to appear before this audience: proud for the honour, and ſorry for the cauſe ——————"

The partial and prepared few who had eſpouſed the part of the actor, though they had procured him an entrance to the ſtage, could not command the voice of the houſe. The friends of the managers, and the lovers of order, ſtopped the ſpeaker ſhort by a majority of voices, inſiſting upon the amuſements of the evening being continued.

Stayley retired diſappointed and diſconcerted, amidſt a confuſed clamour; and the play and farce went on without farther moleſtation.

When

WHEN the curtain dropped, the malecontents remained behind; and, though ſcanty in their numbers, made ſo violent and ſucceſsful an effort upon the fears of the managers, as to extort from them a promiſe that Mr Stayley ſhould be engaged.

THIS compulſatory conſent, on the part of the managers, was immediately retracted by them and the performers, in the following hand-bill:—

THEATRE.

Edinburgh, January 12. 1767.

THE Managers and Performers humbly hope, that, from the dangerous ſituation both They and the Theatre were in on Saturday night, after the farce was over, from a party who ſtaid behind the reſt of the audience, in behalf of Mr *Stayley*, and, by throwing ſtones, pieces of ſticks, halfpence, and lighted candles, COMPELLED a promiſe of his being engaged, as the ONLY MEANS left to *preſerve the Theatre from fire and deſtruction*, they ſhall ſtand juſtified to the public in ſuſpending all

Entertainments,

Entertainments, till they can be aſſured of a proper protection; and alſo of refuſing to admit, as one of their community, a Man capable of taking ſuch unwarrantable and wicked means to gain his ends.

JAMES AICKIN.
JOSEPH YOUNGER,
J. DOWSON. } A. J. DIDIER.
D. BEATT. } W. SEDGWICK.
WILLIAM ADAMS,
C. SMITH.
CHA. TINDAL.
THO. LANCASHIRE.
SIMEON QUIN.
THO. YOUNG.

THE ſame day, bills were alſo paſted up and diſtributed through the town,

THEATRE.

THERE WILL BE
NO PLAY
TILL FURTHER NOTICE.

THUS the theatrical entertainments were, for a while, totally ſuſpended, the time being taken up in diſperſing hand-bills and addreſ-

ſes

ſes by both parties. At length the managers, having taken their reſolution, the houſe was opened on Saturday the 24th of January 1767.

THE audience were more hoſtile than ever. A parley was obtained; and the terms of capitulation were, "that one of the players, in the name of the reſt, ſhould beg pardon of the audience, for ſome reflections in their publications." This ſatisfaction being refuſed, hoſtilities commenced.

APPREHENSIVE of an attack, from perceiving the files of the enemy ſo much augmented, the garriſon had continued under arms. The aſſailants preſſed forward on the word. They croſſed the iron-ſpiked barriers upon the ſeats they had torn up, and aſcended the platform. Rails of lattices, branches of chandeliers, and broken benches, were their brandiſhed weapons. To theſe were oppoſed truncheons, ſpears, and battle-axes, mock implements of war, that had long been inured to conqueſt. Agincourt and Boſworth Field were vouchers of their triumphs. Fatal reverſe! The fort was carried; and thoſe who eſcaped not through caſements, or ſome private ways,

were compelled to ſurrender at diſcretion. The inſide of the building was demoliſhed, the moveables ranſacked, and the fixtures deſtroyed.

A DETACHMENT of the city guard advanced, but were repulſed. A reinforcement from the caſtle was then diſpatched to the relief of the beſieged; but, before it arrived, the place was taken, and the garriſon put to the rout.

MR JAMES AICKIN was at that time at the head of the Canongate company. After the diſpute, he accepted of an engagement in Drury Lane, where he ſtill continues, a credit to the ſtage both in his private and his public character.

THE gentlemen proprietors "brought an action of damages againſt thoſe concerned in the riot, in which their property was deſtroyed. The latter, with great addreſs, traverſed it by a counter-action againſt the proprietors, for having plays acted in their houſe, contrary to act of Parliament. Many of thoſe proprietors were now raiſed to the Bench; hardly a quorum remained to decide the queſtion:

tion: the ludicrouſneſs of the caſe was perceived, and both actions dropped*."

HAD my bargain for the theatre with Mr Dowſon been completed, the riot, and conſequent deſtruction of the houſe, would thereby have been prevented; for it was my avowed determination, the moment I was inveſted with the power, to have engaged Mr Stayley; and as long as they choſe to come, the public ſhould have ſeen him.

THERE was at this time a double warfare in the Edinburgh theatrical world. Beſides the contention with Stayley and the managers, in which the town had already interpoſed, there was a civil conteſt between the heroines,

"Two ſtars keep not their motion in one ſphere."

The one could bear no equal, the other no ſuperior.

MRS WARD, who, as before obſerved, was the original *Lady Randolph*, had, from that circumſtance, and by having an opportunity

* *Arnot's Hiſtory of Edinburgh*, p. 379.

of playing many of her favourite characters with Mr Digges, acquired no ſmall degree of eſtimation with the town.

On her agreement with the managers, ſhe had ſtipulated that her name ſhould be particularized from the reſt of the performers, in the advertiſements of the day, by an enlarged type,

" Whereby ſhe might receive
" Particular addition from the bill,
" That writes them all alike."

Mrs Baker, a riſing favourite, inſiſted that her name ſhould be of the ſame ſize. Both of them could not be complied with. Mr Younger, who had been appointed by Dowſon and Beatt their deputy, in an addreſs to the public acquaints them, that " Mrs Ward had agreed for her choice of parts, diſtinction of name in the bill, and every other preference which her rank as an actreſs entitled her to;" and officially informs Mrs Baker, " that he could not poſſibly comply with her requeſt of having her name diſtinguiſhed in the Monday's bills," the night on which the managers had ſuſpended the enter-

entertainments of the evening; a ſtep which they were no doubt the more readily induced to take, from this addition to their embarraſſments. Mrs Baker's reply to Mr Younger's card was,

SIR,

THE *Town* does not more heartily laugh at your *acting*, than I do at your *power*. I have formed no engagements with you. I will take no directions from you. I have behaved juſtly. I ſent Mr Dowſon word before the bills were printed, that if he would not put in my name as Mr Bland had dictated, he muſt not put it in *at all*. Surely it is in my option to play *Miſs Stirling*, or let it alone. The part is Mrs Robſon's. I perſiſt in my reſolution of not doing it, except my name is diſtinguiſhed. If therefore it is neither altered nor taken out on Monday, I muſt excuſe myſelf to the *Town*, (which has ever been kindly partial to me) in the manner I think beſt; and I believe you will find, in the public opinion, that *nobody* in this company deſerves greater diſtinction than

ELIZA BAKER.

To Mr Younger.

LETTER

LETTER after letter paſſed on the ſubject, and reply upon reply, which finally produced addreſſes to the public. Theſe procured favourites to each among a partial few, but more generally created diſguſt againſt the authors, for teizing them with matters in which they had no concern.

THIS contention moſt certainly heightened the theatrical ferment; and Mr Stayley's diſpute with the managers, in which the town was already embarked, completed the cataſtrophe. To prevent altercations of this kind, I never ſuffered any diſtinction of names in the bills; nor attempted to point out where conſequence or merit lay; that I wiſhed to leave to the deciſion of the audience.

I WAS acquainted with Mrs Baker in London, before her firſt viſit to Edinburgh. She was the daughter of Dr Clendon upon Ludgate Hill. She had great theatrical abilities, but was unfortunate in her figure, which was corpulent, and conſequently ill ſuited to many characters in which it was her ambition to tread. She poſſeſſed a vaſt fund of underſtanding, both natural and acquired, and was a moſt facetious

facetious companion. She had alſo an excellent knack at letter-writing, as a proof of which, I beg leave to refer the reader to the concluſion of Mr Wilkinſon's works; which likewiſe does credit to that author, for his ſelection of thoſe epiſtles for publication. But ſhe had an unbounded ſpirit, which frequently mounted into paſſions, that involved her in broils, particularly with managers.

In one of theſe paroxyiſms, ſhe quarrelled afterwards with Mr Digges, quitted the ſtage, and aſſumed the profeſſion of a ſchool-miſtreſs, to teach the Engliſh language, for which ſhe was completely qualified. In this ſituation, ſhe acquitted herſelf with great credit, and had the addreſs, when Mr Roſs wiſhed to part with his theatre, to prevail upon a gentleman, whoſe children ſhe taught, to advance her L. 3000 for the purchaſe. The money was ready, and the bargain made; but before the deed could be drawn out and ſigned, the *great idea*, that at laſt

"She ſhould move, and ſpeak, and be herſelf a queen,"

ſo forcibly ſtruck her vital movement, that ſhe retired

retired to her chamber, and almoſt inſtantly expired. Thus ſhe literally lived in a ſtorm, and died in a convulſion of joy.

THE theatre, thus reduced to a mere ſhell, received a haſty and a temporary repair; and the dramatic entertainments were reſumed before the end of the winter ſeaſon.

MR ROSS, to make uſe of a common phraſe, ſtept immediately into my ſhoes, the agreement being transferred to him preciſely on the ſame terms; only, that inſtead of L. 1400, he was to give no more than L. 1100; the deduction, I preſume, being occaſioned by the property having been leſſened from the effects of the riot.

IN conſequence of this agreement, the gentlemen proprietors, who, as before obſerved, had applied for an act of Parliament, in order to eſtabliſh a theatre by Royal Patent, as ſoon as it was obtained*, conveyed it to the purchaſer of the property, Mr David Roſs of Covent Garden.

MR

* September 2. 1767.

Mr Lee, formerly manager and proprietor, put in his claim of preference for the aſſignment of the patent, which had been applied for, and was expected ſoon to paſs the Great Seal, ſoliciting, in perſon, his old ſituation. Mr Roſs, then in the firſt claſs of actors at Covent Garden, was his opponent. He was a native, and withal had a very formidable intereſt; and conſequently proved victorious.

Exclusive of thoſe advantages, Mr Roſs, was no doubt a ſuperior actor. His *Varanes*, his *Jaffier*, and his *Eſſex*, were maſter-pieces, when he pleaſed; and his *Lord Townly*, and *Young Bevil*, in his prime of life, were eſteemed paterns for genteel comedy. But, as we ſeldom find any one perfect, a natural inactivity, and the love of eaſe, were his great drawbacks.

Sed nil niſi bonum de mortuis.

Mr Ross immediately publiſhed propoſals for the erection of a new theatre, upon the ſame footing with other patent houſes in England; and for that purpoſe, the ſum of L. 2500 Sterling was ſubſcribed, and paid in

ſhares of L. 100 each, by *Twenty-five Gentlemen.*

THE conditions were, that each ſubſcriber ſhould receive three pounds of intereſt *per annum*, with perſonal admiſſion to all the exhibitions of the theatre; and that the patent, houſe, ornaments, ſcenery, and wardrobe ſhould be mortgaged to them for their ſecurity.

MR ROSS, in conſequence of this ſubſcription, built and furniſhed the preſent Theatre Royal, in a very reſpectable ſtyle.

BESIDES the L. 2500 of ſubſcription-money, this theatre, with other parts of the undertaking, coſt upwards of L. 2500 Sterling. To theſe ſums are to be added the two annuities of L. 50 each, to Mrs Hamilton and Mrs Thomſon, original proprietors, and other debts and conditions of the bargain, which, at the loweſt eſtimation, amounted to L. 1900 more.

MR ROSS's expences for the purchaſe and building then ſtood thus:

Purchaſe

Purchaſe from the proprietors,	L. 1100	0	0
Expence of patent, with clauſe in the act of Parliament,	300	0	0
25 Subſcribers at L. 100 each,	2500	0	0
Expence of building above that ſum, - -	2500	0	0
Two annuities of L. 50, only at five years purchaſe, -	500	0	0
	L. 6900	0	0

THIS advance being above the abilities of the patentee, it involved him in debt and inconvenience. He was obliged, therefore, to let the theatre to other managers. The rents received, with incidental abatements, ſcarcely returned 5 *per cent.* upon the original ſums advanced, and conſequently there remained no fund for diſcharging the patentee's debts.

THE intermediate leſſees, having no intereſt in the property, uſed the theatre as they found it; without making the neceſſary additions and repairs; and conſequently the ſcenery, wardrobe, and ornaments, were at laſt worn out, and the fabric of the houſe itſelf neglected.

IN

In this ſituation, I purchaſed from Mr Roſs the whole property and patent, upon ſeveral conditions; and particularly, that I ſhould engage to pay the debts and incumberances of the theatre, find ſecurity to Mr Roſs for an annuity of L. 150 *per annum*, for the term of his life, and take upon me the arrears of intereſt due to the proprietors, which laſt article alone amounted to upwards of L. 1000.

After the declaration I had made, of quitting *every connection with the ſtage for ever*, it might require ſome explanation to free me from the imputation of an inſtability of conduct, in my purſuits through life.

This apparent inconſiſtency could eaſily be explained, and conſequently expunged; were I to enter into private tranſactions and events, unneceſſary on this, or perhaps on any other occaſion, to diſcloſe; ſuffice it therefore to ſay, that I found it adviſable to return to a profeſſion that I had formerly given up.

The firſt ſeaſon of Mr Roſs's management, (1768) I appeared again on the Edinburgh theatre, in the part of *Romeo*. A daughter of

Mr

Mr Sowdon's, under the aſſumed name of Brown, was the *Juliet*. She was afterwards Mrs Jackſon of the Theatre Royal of Covent Garden, and now of that of Edinburgh.

THE houſe had been opened, for the firſt time, under the ſanction of law, on the evening of December 9th 1767, with the play of the *Earl of Eſſex*; the part of *Eſſex* by Mr Roſs. Previous to which he ſpoke an occaſional prologue, written by James Boſwell, Eſq; in which he thus noticed the acquiſition of the *Royal Grant*.

This night lov'd GEORGE's free enlighten'd age,
Bids *Royal Favour* ſhield the SCOTTISH STAGE:
His Royal Favour ev'ry boſom cheers;
The Drama now with dignity appears.

THE ſeaſon turned out advantageous to the manager. His ſubſcriptions for a new theatre were filled, and the firſt ſtone of the building was laid upon the eaſt ſide of the north end of the New Bridge, the three main arches of which were then turned; till that could be completed, he gave the theatre in the Canongate a ſlight repair, and continued to perform in it till the cloſe of the ſeaſon.

THE

The following year, (December 1769) the new theatre was opened*; but not with that torrent of ſucceſs with which the manager had been flattered. Depending too much upon the novelty of new walls, new ſcenery, and new decorations, he had neglected the providing a company of performers, that ought to have kept pace with the ſplendour of the houſe. The ſouth abutment of the bridge, too, which could not be foreſeen, gave way. This greatly depreſſed the theatrical ſpirit of the audience, and dampt the ardor for building in St Andrew's Square and its environs, then proceeding very rapidly forward.

Mr Ross, depreſſed and diſguſted by fortune and the town, had neither fortitude nor perſeverance to wait a favourable change in either; but, in a fit of deſpair, let his theatre for three years to Mr Foote, for five hundred guineas a-year. That gentleman, by producing an excellent company†, a better perhaps has not been ſeen in Edinburgh, retired to his villa at Weſt End, before the expiration of the ſeaſon, with L. 1000 in his pocket, after paying all expences.

A thou-

* The Edinburgh Theatre, according to the then advanced prices of 3s. 2s. and 1s. will hold, with convenience, about L. 140.

† See Appendix, No. VII.

A THOUSAND pound for the managerial cares and confinement through a whole winter, upon the heels of a fatiguing ſummer campaign at his own theatre in the Hay Market, was no object to Mr Foote; he therefore diſpoſed of his leaſe to Meſſrs Digges and Bland in partnerſhip. When the leaſe was out, they agreed with Mr Roſs for a renewal, upon the ſame terms, for five years.

THE character of Mr Digges, both as an actor and manager, was ſo well known and eſtabliſhed, as to render any inveſtigation in either capacity here unneceſſary. That of his colleague, Mr Bland, is not, I preſume, ſo univerſally underſtood.

MR JOHN BLAND *ſenior* has been twenty-three years treaſurer of this theatre, ten of which were during my management. Since my connection with him, which was two years previous to that period, I have ever found him a worthy and a reſpectable man. He was eldeſt ſon to an eminent Civilian in Ireland, who arrived to be judge of the Prerogative Court. After having taken his degrees of Bachelor and Maſter of Arts, in the univerſity

univerſity of Dublin, he was entered in the Temple in London, and is of an older ſtanding than moſt of the Benchers there.

He had a turn, however, for the army, which ſuperceding the law, he obtained a cornetcy in General Bland's regiment of dragoons, who was his relation as well as nameſake. He ſerved at the battle of *Dettingen*; was taken priſoner in that of *Fontenoy*; and was alſo in the diſturbances of the year Forty-Five, at the ſkirmiſh on *Clifton Moor*, where he fought by the ſide of *General Honeywood*, when that gallant officer fell covered with wounds. On the retreat of the enemy, the General was carried in a mangled condition to Appleby, where, to the ſurpriſe of all, he recovered. He was afterwards ſo much reſpected there, from the foregoing circumſtance, and became ſo attached to the place, that he was elected one of their members, and continued ſo to the day of his death. Having a vote for the county, it was there I had the honour of knowing him, of being ſhown by him the ſcars of thoſe mouthed wounds he had received, and of hearing from himſelf the foregoing particulars.

At

At all theſe places, and in other trying ſituations, Mr Bland has always acquitted himſelf with great credit.

Mr Ross, at the outſet of his undertaking in Edinburgh, received him as a quarter partner, for the advance of ſome hundred pounds. He afterwards compromiſed the matter with him, for an annuity of L.100 a-year. But being involved in his circumſtances along with Mr Digges, having been bound to Mr Roſs for the rent of the theatre, it was ſunk in the general wreck.

Five years out of the three-and-twenty, Mr Bland was manager as well as treaſurer; and it was owing to his exertions, that Mrs Hartley's theatrical abilities were made known to the world, as ſhe was by him introduced upon the Edinburgh ſtage, in the year 1771.

Mrs Jordan, the celebrated actreſs, is Mr Bland's niece, being the daughter of Francis Bland, Eſq; a younger brother of the Mr Bland of whom I am ſpeaking, and Miſs

Grace Phillips, the daughter of a clergyman in Wales.

UNDER theſe different managements, ſince Mrs Bellamy's ſeaſon, Mr Sheridan, Mr Wilkinſon, Mr and Mrs Yates, Mr and Mrs Barry, Mr Foote, Mr Reddiſh, and Miſs Catley, were ſeen upon the Edinburgh ſtage.

THE theatre was afterwards rented by Mr Corri, then by Mr Wilkinſon, for ſeparate years; till, finally, it was purchaſed by me of the patentee, David Roſs, Eſq; as before ſtated.

THIS tranſaction took place at London, November 10. 1781.

THE moment I came into poſſeſſion, I proceeded to put it into the beſt poſſible condition. I gave the houſe a complete repair, put on a new roof, and furniſhed it with new ſcenery, ornaments, properties, and a wardrobe ſuperior to the former ones, and not inferior to any in the kingdom, out of London.

I AM

I AM conſcious at all times, of having exerted my utmoſt induſtry and abilities in the diſcharge of my duty. I have on all occaſions endeavoured to procure the beſt performers. There is not a perſon of any merit upon the ſtage, who has not viſited Edinburgh, or to whom I have not made particular applications, and ſuitable offers. Excepting that of Mr Foote, the companies under my care have been equal to any brought by former managers, and at all times inferior to none in the iſland, out of the metropolis of England.

THE *Dramatis Perſonæ* of the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh, for the laſt ten years, ſhall vouch for this aſſertion.

SECT. V.

List of Performers at the Theatre Royal Edinburgh, from the year 1781 *to* 1792 *inclusive.*

1781-2.

Mr Ward,
Woods,
Gaudry,
Williamson,
Johnson,
Knight,
Banks,
Marshall,
Hollingsworth,
Sutherland,
T. Banks,
Hallion,
Charteris,
Taylor,
Simpson,
Tannet,
Mountfort,
And Jackson.

Mrs Bulkley,
Ward,
Kniveton,
Marshall,
Henderson,
Tannet,
Charteris,
Mountfort,
Gaudry,
Woods,
Jackson,
Miss Kirby

SUMMER.

Mr Leoni,
Davies,
Aldridge.

Miss Capon.

1783.

Mr Woods,
Johnſon,
Griſt,
Moſs,
Lamaſh,
Ward,
Fowler,
Kelly,
Tannet,
Bell,
Hallion,
Sparks,
Simpſon,
Dodd,
Benſon,
Bland *ſen.*
Bland *jun.*
J. Bland,
Charteris,
T. Banks,
Mountfort.

Mrs Bulkley,
Cornelys,
Baddeley,
Burden,
Walcot,
Woods,
Henderſon,
Sparks,
Charteris,
Mountfort,
Bland,
Tannet,
Jackſon,
Miſs Farren.

SUMMER.

Mr Ryder.

1784.

Mr Cautherley,
Woods,
Collins,
Johnſon,
Sutherland,
Lamaſh,
Moſs,
W. Wells,
Jones,
Hallion,
Bell,
Sparks,
Bland *ſen.*
Bland *jun.*
J. Bland,
Dalton,
Simpſon,
Mountfort,
Tannet,
Davis,
Charteris,

Miſs Morris,
Mrs Baddeley,
Woods,
Henderſon,
Charteris,
W. Wells,
Sparks,
Mountfort,
Bland,
Tannet,
Jackſon.

SUMMER.

Mr Henderſon.

Mrs Siddons,
Firſt Engagement in Edinburgh.

1785.

Mr Yates,
Clinch,
Woods,
Ward,
Kipling,
Duncan,
Powell,
Lamaſh,
Everard,
Hallion,
Bell,
Sparks,
W. Wells,
Waylett,
Davis,
Mountfort,
Bland *ſen.*
Bland *jun.*
J. Bland,
Charteris.

Mrs Yates,
Bulkley,
Baddeley,
Sparks,
W. Wells,
Duncan,
Waylett,
Kipling,
Woods,
Henderſon,
Charteris,
Mountfort,
Bland,
Jackſon.

SUMMER.

Mr Clinch.

Mrs Siddons,
Second Engagement.
Miſs Kemble.

1786.

Mr Wilſon,	Mrs Crawford,
Woods,	W. Wells,
Clinch,	Woods,
Iliff,	Sparks,
O'Reilly,	O'Reilly,
Kipling,	Kemble,
Kemble,	Charteris,
Bell,	Kipling,
Betterton,	Mountfort,
Hallion,	Bland,
Michel,	Iliff,
W. Wells,	Jackſon.
Lamaſh,	
Sparks,	
Mountfort,	
Le Brun,	
Bland *ſen.*	
Bland *jun.*	
J. Bland,	
Charteris,	
Yates,	
Mayſon.	

SUMMER.

Mr Pope.	Mrs Pope,
	Jordan,
	Firſt Engagement,
	Mrs Kennedy,
	The celebrated Singer.

1787.

Mr Fennell,
Woods,
Moſs,
Iliff,
Lamaſh,
Wilſon,
Ward,
Archer,
Kemble,
Bell,
Hallion,
Sparks,
Villars,
Yates,
W. Wells,
Bland *ſen.*
Bland *jun.*
J. Bland,
Charteris,
Mayſon,
Charteris *jun.*
Michell,
Tumblers,

Mrs Robinſon,
Wroton,
Iliff,
Woods,
Archer,
Kemble,
Charteris,
Villars,
Sparks,
W. Wells,
Bland,
Lamaſh,
Jackſon,

And Lee-Lewes, *Four Nights.*

SUMMER.

Mrs Jordan,
Her Second Engagement.

1788.

Mr Fennell,	Mrs Bulkley,
Woods,	Woods,
Wilſon,	Brooks,
Moſs,	Strictland,
Williamſon,	W. Wells,
Bell,	Villars,
Hallion,	Sparks,
Archer,	Charteris,
Francis,	Bland,
Sparks,	Jackſon,
Bland *ſen.*	Miſs George.
Bland *jun.*	
J. Bland,	
Villars,	
Charteris,	
Charteris *jun.*	

SUMMER.

Mr Fennell.	Mrs Siddons,
	Third Engagement.
	Mrs Perez.

1789.

Mr King,
Holman,
Wilson,
Woods,
Williamson,
Moss,
Archer,
Bell,
Hallion,
Sparks,
Charteris,
Bland *sen.*
Bland *jun.*
J. Bland,
Henderson,
Woodroffe,
Finch,
Davis,
Charteris *jun.*

Miss George,
Hughes,
Mrs Barresford,
W. Wells,
Charteris,
Archer,
Sparks,
Coates,
Bland,
Jackson.

SUMMER.

Mrs Jordan,
Her Third Engagement.

1790.

Mr King,	Mrs Eſten,
Pope,	Barresford,
Wilſon,	Taylor,
Woods,	W. Wells,
Lamaſh,	Sparks,
Moſs,	Woods,
Williamſon,	Lowe,
Taylor,	Clarke,
Hallion,	Charteris,
Bell,	Archer,
Bland *ſen.*	Mountfort,
Bland *jun.*	Bland,
J. Bland,	Jackſon,
Charteris,	Miſs Fontenelle.
Charteris *jun.*	
Sparks,	
Woodroffe,	
Lowe,	
Mapples,	
Archer,	
Mountfort,	
Bonville.	

SUMMER.

Mr King.	Miſs Farren.

1791.

Mr Ryder,
Woods,
Kennedy,
Lamaſh,
Williamſon,
Willoughby,
Hallion,
Bell,
Guion,
Kipling,
Biggs,
Williams,
Bland *ſen.*
Bland *jun.*
J. Bland,
Charteris,
Charteris *jun.*
Mountfort,
Bew,
Sparks,
Toms,
Woodroffe.

Mrs Eſten,
Miſs Ryder,
R. Ryder,
Mrs Barresford,
Kennedy,
W. Wells,
Sparks,
Elliot,
Mountfort,
Charteris,
Bland,
Stewart,
Biggs,
Jackſon,

SUMMER.

Mrs Eſten.

1792.

Mr Kemble *Manager.*

Mr Kemble,	Mrs Kemble,
Lee-Lewes,	Lee-Lewes,
Woods,	Woods,
Lamash,	Stuart,
Bell,	Mountfort,
Hallion,	Charteris,
Sparks,	Bland,
Charteris,	* Ware,
Charteris *jun.*	* Whitmore,
Bland *jun.*	* Marriot,
J. Bland,	* Miss Grist,
Perry,	* Ross.
Mountfort,	
* Hill,	
* Whitmore,	
* Moreton,	Mr Bowden,
* Baker,	*Six Nights at the opening*
* Vertu,	*of the House.*
* Wallack,	
* Marriot,	
* Meadows.	

SUMMER.

Mr John Kemble, *Six Nights, Second Visit to Edinburgh*
Mrs Siddons, *at the Races, Fourth Visit to Edinburgh.*

Mr and *Mrs Lee-Lewes* came to Edinburgh accidentally; and did not join the Company till February 27.

Those names marked thus * are the Performers that Mr Kemble introduced to the Edinburgh Theatre; the others were belonging to the former Company.

SECT. VI.

Origin of the Glaſgow ſtage—Plays in Barrel's dancing-hall—In a temporary booth in the Caſtle Yard—Lee the manager—Digges and Ward there—The houſe aſſaulted by the mob—A regular theatre at the weſt end of the town erected—Stage ſet on fire—Mrs Bellamy there—Williams manager—Brown, the famous Copper Captain, there—Meſſrs Jackſon, Bland and Mills—Theatre burnt—New one erected in Dunlop Street—Some impediments to it—How removed—Theatre opened—Arrangements of the future ſeaſon.

BEFORE we proceed farther to inveſtigate the theatrical events of the foregoing ſeaſons in Edinburgh, it will be neceſſary to take notice of the dramatic advances in Glaſgow, where there is alſo a Theatre; which, though upon a ſmaller ſcale, is perhaps as compact and convenient in its conſtruction, as that of the metropolis.

THE

THE prejudices that had been univerſally inculcated againſt ſtage repreſentations, and the members of the profeſſion, were not leſs violent in their operations there, than in the other parts of Scotland. The advances, therefore, towards an eſtabliſhment for theatrical performances, were rendered proportionally ſlow. The only hiſtoric account I find on the ſubject, is, that " entertainments in Glaſgow for the winter, are dancing and card-aſſemblies, *per vices*, or week about, concerts of muſic, and ſometimes the players from Edinburgh*."

I HEAR of them in a room, called *Barrel's dancing-hall* †, by a ſet of itinerants, where they were permitted to fix their portable ſcenery.

THE firſt edifice, purpoſely erected for ſtage repreſentations, was only *pro tempore*, and that merely a wooden booth; it was placed againſt *the old wall of the Biſhop's Palace*, in an area called the *Caſtle Yard*, adjoining to the cathedral. Mr Lee was the projector: It was conſequently ſince the year 1752. This hovel

* *Gibſon's Hiſtory of Glaſgow*, p. 131.

† In a houſe upon the eaſt ſide of the ſtreet above the College.

hovel had the credit afterwards of exhibiting to the then audience of Glaſgow, Meſſrs Digges, Love, Stamper, and Mrs Ward. It was little reliſhed by the lower order of people, and was attacked by the weavers, who were ſpirited on to the aſſault by Mr Whitfield, with ſtones, and other miſſile weapons, but not deſtroyed: The ſtrong outſide wall next the ſtreet proved its principal ſupport*.

Between the firſt and the nineteenth of the month of April 1762, I accompanied Meſſrs Beatt and Love to Glaſgow, to ſolicit the building of a regular Theatre, within the liberties of the city, and that, as centrical as poſſible. I had not the ſmalleſt concern in the undertaking, being no farther intereſted in its ſucceſs, but as a well-wiſher to the cauſe: I made it a mere jaunt of pleaſure. We were, I remember, two days upon the journey. There was no bridge betwixt Calder and Livingſton. The river was high, but being on horſeback, and accuſtomed to theſe kind of torrents, I paſſed it without any heſitation, or apprehenſion of

 danger.

The principal performer in Barrel's Hall was a Mr Lion. Mrs Lamp and Mrs Storer ſung there. They were afterwards drowned returning from America, having acquired a plentiful fortune by their profeſſion.

* It was erected in the years 1752 and 1753.

danger. My companions, who were in a chaiſe, after deliberating for a few moments, alſo took the ſtream; but miſſing the ford, got intangled amongſt the ſtones, and became really, which is no uncommon caſe, *managers in diſtreſs*. They landed, however, ſafe on the oppoſite ſide, and reſted at Whitburn. The road thence at that time, traverſing the heights, paſſed cloſe to the Kirk of Shots, the preſent one being then only marked out.

THE two days I ſtaid at Glaſgow were pleaſantly employed in viſiting the natural and acquired beauties of the place. In my perambulations around that city, at the preſent day, the recollection of what I then ſaw ſtrikes as forcibly upon my comparative ideas, as when I contemplate the change I now behold in St George's and Mary-le-bone Fields, the whole being laid out in regular ranges of ſtreets, where I formerly and frequently enjoyed my *country walks*.

I SPENT the evenings with the managers, from whom I learned, that though, through a number of obtruding difficulties, they had not ſucceeded

ſucceeded to the extent of their wiſhes, yet in the main point they had prevailed.

FIVE gentlemen * had undertaken to erect a theatre at their own expence, which was to be rented by Meſſrs Beatt and Love. No one being hardy enough, at any price, to accommodate them with ground for the purpoſe, within the diſtrict of the corporation, they purchaſed a plat at the weſt end of the town, without its juriſdiction.

MR MILLER of Weſterton, maltman in Glaſgow, was the proprietor. He put five ſhillings the ſquare yard upon his ground; a moſt extravagant price in thoſe days, and in that ſituation. The gentlemen remonſtrating againſt the immenſity of the price, he replied, that as it was intended to be occupied by a Temple of *Belial*, he ſhould expect an extraordinary ſum for the purchaſe. His demand,

* William M'Dowall of Caſtle Semple, William Bogle of Hamilton-Farm, John Baird of Craigton, Robert Bogle of Shettleſton, and James Dunlop of Garnkirk, Eſquires. Their ſhares of the expence amounted to L. 100, beſides a ſubſcription of L. 200: They ſold it to the directors of the aſſembly, who laid out L. 700 or L. 800 more; ſo that the whole building coſt L. 1500.

demand, however unreaſonable, was complied with, and a Theatre in conſequence erected.

MRS BELLAMY, in her life, ſays, "upon my firſt engaging at Edinburgh, the gentlemen of Glaſgow offered to build a Theatre by ſubſcription, if our company would promiſe to perform there in the ſummer. To this we readily conſented, as the inhabitants were not only opulent, but liberal to a degree*."

WE are willing to make every allowance to Mrs Bellamy's aſſertion; but cannot help obſerving, that this agreement took place a month before her engagement in Edinburgh commenced, or her viſit to that city was even thought of. She opened the houſe indeed, and I have no heſitation in concluding, that a ſuppoſition of that event accelerated the completion of the building. Though the gentlemen had raiſed the fabrick, they could not lay the ferment in the minds of the lower order of men. Before the intended night of opening, the houſe was ſet on fire, and with difficulty ſaved from being totally reduced to aſhes.

"WHEN

* Vol. IV. p. 56.

"WHEN we arrived at Glaſgow," continues Mrs Bellamy, "one of the performers exclaimed, 'Madam, you are ruined, for you have nothing left, but what you have with you in the chaiſes.' I was then informed, that the ſtage of the new Theatre had been ſet on fire the night before, and that all my paraphernalia and wardrobe, which lay there unpacked, had been conſumed by the flames.*"

"THE conflagration, I found, was occaſioned by the following circumſtance: A methodiſt teacher, who held forth in that city, told his auditors, that he dreamed the preceding night, he was in the infernal regions, at a grand entertainment, where all the devils in hell were preſent, when Lucifer their chief gave for a toaſt, the health of Mr ——, who had ſold his ground to build him a houſe upon, (meaning the Theatre), and which was to be opened the next day for them all to reign in.

"THE poor ignorant enthuſiaſtic hearers of this *Godly* preacher, found their enmity againſt Satan and his ſubjects inſtantly inflamed by this

* In the ſpring 1764.

this harangue; and in order to prevent ſo alarming an extenſion of his Infernal Majeſty's empire, they haſtened away in a body to the new built play-houſe, and ſet the ſtage on fire. Luckily the flames were extinguiſhed, before any other part of the Theatre was conſumed; but the whole of my theatrical wardrobe, which lay in the packages upon it, were deſtroyed." "They had coſt," ſhe ſays, "many many hundreds of pounds, and at that time, upon a moderate computation, were worth nine hundred; there being among them a complete ſet of garnets and pearls, from cap to ſtomacher*."

MRS BELLAMY proceeds to inform us, among other particulars, that being reſolved to perform, the next day a temporary ſtage was erected of looſe boards covered with carpets; and to equip her with a wardrobe for comedy, before ſix o'clock, from not being miſtreſs of one gown, ſhe found herſelf in the poſſeſſion of above forty, and ſome of theſe almoſt new, as well as very rich. Nor did the ladies confine themſelves to outward garments only. She received preſents of all kinds, and from

* *Life of Mrs Bellamy*, vol. IV. p. 59, 60.

from every part of the adjacent country, together with invitations and parties for the whole time of her reſidence in their neighbourhood*. They opened with the *Citizen* by way of a play, and the *Mock Doctor* for the farce. Mr Reddiſh and Mr Aicken were the principal performers with her there that ſeaſon.

From this time the Glaſgow Theatre was occupied at different periods by the Edinburgh company, till it was taken by one Williams†, an adventuring itinerant manager; who being active and enterpriſing for one ſeaſon, cleared a conſiderable ſum. Brown‡, the famous *Copper Captain*, engaged with him, and proved peculiarly attractive.

The Edinburgh Theatre having been let by Mr Roſs to Mr Wilkinſon of York, he brought his performers along with him: the greateſt part, therefore, of the Edinburgh one, forming themſelves into an independent company,

* Page 63, 64.

† He poſſeſſed it from 1768 and 1769, to the end of 1771. Digges had it 1772, 1773.

‡ That pleaſant comedian died at the Saracen's Head. Mr Graham was at the expence of his funeral.

pany, fitted up a temporary Theatre at Dundee. Meſſrs Bland and Mills were their managers. The former had procured the leaſe of the houſe at Glaſgow for the following Winter. I was always upon habits of friendſhip with Mr Bland; and meeting him accidentally in Edinburgh, he communicated his plan, and prevailed upon me to become one of the party, on a joint partnerſhip with him and Mr Mills, for the ſeaſon only, upon certain conditions *. Miſs Manſel, then Mrs Farren, was our principal woman. The ſcheme ſucceeded, and I was thereby induced to embark in it for a permanency. Accordingly, before the cloſe of the ſeaſon, I purchaſed one full third of the wardrobe and moveable property †. We had agreed for a leaſe of a new Theatre, then building at Aberdeen; and, in the mean time, propoſed taking the company, for a ſhort time, to Dumfries. I had been there on the occaſion, and ſlept at Kilmarnock on my return. When I arrived in the morning at the place where the Theatre had ſtood, I found it covered with a ſmoky ruin ‡.

THUS

* The ſeaſon commenced January 12. 1780.

† April 25. ‡ May 5.

THUS was all our theatrical property, *one-third* of which I had been in poſſeſſion of only eleven days, reduced to nothing. My own ſtage dreſſes, to no inconſiderable amount, were very fortunately at my lodging, and, conſequently eſcaped the general wreck. How the accident happened was never known. It had all the appearance of deſign. There had been no play, and, conſequently, no fires, for two days. Nor could there have been any at the gallery-end of the houſe, from whence the flames firſt iſſued, as the dreſſing-rooms were, and, indeed, always are, contiguous to the ſtage*.

SOON after this unfortunate cataſtrophe, I applied to the proprietors, to know whether it was their deſign to rebuild the Theatre, or to what purpoſe they reſolved to convert their property. I was informed, that they had not the leaſt intention of building; and that I was at liberty, with their full conſent, to erect a houſe, at my own riſk, if I judged it adviſeable ſo to do: nay, one of the gentlemen† propoſed, that if I choſe to build upon the ſame

O ſpot,

* The building had been inſured for L.1000, but the premium, by ſome neglect, had not been paid up. The Sun Fire Office, however, very genteelly made a preſent of L.300 towards the loſs.

† Mr Bogle of Shettleſton.

ſpot, I ſhould be complimented with a preſent of the ground and remaining walls. I thanked him for his kind intention, but declined the offer; as I rather choſe to buy ground, almoſt at any rate, if it could be procured, in the heart of the town. A centrical ſituation, I judged, would ſoon refund the difference. With this view, I purchaſed that part of St. Enoch's Croft which now forms one ſide of Dunlop Street.

THE foundation was dug, and I attended to lay the firſt ſtone*. During the ceremony I received the following card:—"Dr Gillies and Mr Porteous offer their compliments to Mr Jackſon, and think it their duty candidly to inform him, before he proceed farther in the work, that they intend to join with other proprietors in Dunlop Street, to apply to the magiſtrates to prevent the building of a playhouſe, (or concert-hall for acting plays), in this Street, as being an injury to their property, and inconſiſtent with the diſpoſitions granted by Mr Dunlop to the feuars†. We are

* Saturday, February 17. 1781.

† The Reverend Gentlemen grounded their objections to the Theatre's being erected on the area in queſtion, upon the clauſe in the original feu from Mr Dunlop, "That it ſhall

are to meet with them on Tueſday forenoon; and though we might have delayed giving any intimation till the building was begun, we thought it fair, and becoming our ſtation, to give it thus early. 17th February 1781."

I TOOK no notice of theſe contents to the by-ſtanders, but laid the ſtone, and ordered the work to be carried on with all poſſible diſpatch. On a re-peruſal of the letter, I judged it of ſuch a nature as to require able and ſerious advice. I therefore repaired inſtantly to Edinburgh, and conſulted one of the firſt Advocates there. After receiving his opinion, I addreſſed the following anſwer to the two gentlemen, upon the points in queſtion:—

Edinburgh, February 19. 1781.

REVEREND SIRS,

"I KNOW not whether I ſhould make an apology for delaying my anſwer to your card, or make an excuſe for the trouble I give you in

not be lawful to, nor in the power of the ſaid Robert Barclay, or his foreſaids, to erect any *tan-work*, *candle-work*, *ſoap-work*, nor any other *work* or *manufacture* whatever, upon any part of the foreſaid grounds, which may be deemed a *nuiſance* by the magiſtrates of Glaſgow, or other judges competent."

in the peruſal of this letter. The bearer told me it required no reply. You, perhaps, might wiſh a tacit conſent to it on your parts; but, on mine, I find it incompatible with my intereſt to be ſilent on the occaſion. I ſhould have given you a line on the receipt of your note; but, as one of the two points on which you reſt your complaint is a matter of law, I could not, till I had made myſelf maſter of the ſubject, by the advice of a lawyer, offer my ſentiments with ſafety on the occaſion.

"THAT your property ſhould be injured by the building now erecting, I could in a moment have confuted; for, "where the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together." Thus, where amuſements are held forth, there the body of the people will centre. For to a family, eſpecially when bleſſed with a female progeny, the vicinity to places of entertainment muſt be a leſſening to that family's expence; and you, I preſume, are not to be told the yearly charge of coaches or chairs; nor the convenience that would attend the ſtepping only acroſs the ſtreet to the neceſſary pleaſures of the night. In London, Edinburgh, York, Briſtol, and all the capital towns in the iſland,

iſland, this theory is eſtabliſhed on proof, by the augmentation of the rents of houſes, and the price of lodgings, becauſe they are in the vicinity of the Theatre.

"YOUR ſecond aſſertion, that "it is inconſiſtent with the diſpoſition granted by Mr Dunlop to the feuars," is totally groundleſs. For till you can prove that a Theatre is a manufacture which may be deemed a nuiſance, you cannot ſeriouſly ſuppoſe the preſent building in diſpute as coming within the meaning of Mr Dunlop. A church, a ſchool, or a ball-room might with equal propriety be pronounced nuiſances, as the building in queſtion.

"LET me perſuade you, gentlemen, to take the advice of one who has ſeen enough of the world to point out your prudent conduct on this occaſion. Would you live in neighbourly comfort with one who has pitched his tent ſo near you, moleſt him not in the purſuit of his profeſſion; for, believe it, he means to deport himſelf with the greateſt deference to yours. The ſon of a clergyman, and brought up

up for holy orders himſelf, he ſhall ever pay honour to the ſacred characters of that order.

"LET it be your ſtudy to preach ſanctity without auſterity; for be aſſured, wherever compulſion or reſtraint accompanies admonition or advice, the ſenſes take the alarm, and nature and reaſon, ever rebellious under reſtraint, begin to weigh and to confute the unreaſonable dictates of authority ———. But I beg your pardons; I am running on in a field too large for the bounds of a letter, in which, however, I am ready on all occaſions to meet you in the liſts of argument, on this point, as I am in the Parliament Houſe, before the Lords at Edinburgh, to whom I have already appealed, on the ſubject of the other.

"ON more maturely conſidering the ſubject, it appears clear to me that you do not know the plan of the intended buildings. That which you complain of will neither interrupt your ſight nor offend your hearing. A land is intended to be built along the front of Dunlop Street, according to the rules of that Street, and likewiſe along Dr Gillies's paſſage, as high as either of your houſes. That next

Dr

Dr Gillies will block up his proſpect ſouthward within ten feet of his windows. This will entirely ſcreen him, not only from a ſight of the Theatre, but from every other object that way. Theſe lands may be either heightened or lowered, placed forward or backward, according to the good or bad humour your conduct may occaſion in the proprietor.

"SINCE writing the above, I have been reminded, that one of you (Dr Gillies) was laſt ſummer a fellow-traveller with me. We were not then diſagreeable to each other: the converſation at Auchterarder will atteſt that circumſtance. As we were fellow-travellers in a ſhort journey, let us be ſo in a long one, in a journey of the world; and let us ſhow to each individual of that world, that brotherly love and charity are the characteriſtics of good chriſtians. That it may be ſo with me, ſhall be the conſtant care of,

GENTLEMEN,

Your humble ſervant,

J. JACKSON."

I RETURNED

I RETURNED to Glaſgow on the Tueſday, with an order from one of the Lords of Seſſion to proceed with the work, notwithſtanding any interference to the contrary; with a prohibition to all orders of men, from offering any moleſtation to me or my property*. Some of the heads of the town, to whom the tranſaction was communicated, approved of the meaſure I had taken; and aſſured me, that if any proſecution ſhould take place, they would enter into a ſubſcription to defray the expences.

No interruption was however afterwards attempted: And I muſt do the Reverend Gentlemen the juſtice to declare, that, as neighbours, their conduct towards me has been becoming their ſtations, condeſcending and friendly; and, on my ſide, I flatter myſelf, they have, on all occaſions, found me accommodating and reſpectful.

THOSE

19*th February* 1781.

* "Prohibits and diſcharges the before mentioned Dr Gillies and Mr Porteous, and all others, from troubling or moleſting the complainer in the free exerciſe of his property; and to be intimated.

(Signed) JA: BURNET."

THOSE unfavourable ideas with which they were formerly impreſſed, I cannot help ſuppoſing, they have, from experience, diſcovered to have been unfounded. The Theatre, I preſume, has not, in any ſenſe of the word, proved ſo diſpleaſing as their apprehenſions had formed; and the immediate riſe of the value of property in its vicinity, muſt have convinced them that the worth of their poſſeſſions was not thereby diminiſhed.

THIS, the firſt Theatre that was ever erected in Glaſgow, was at my own ſole charge and expence, which, with the ground and appendages, coſt upwards of L. 3000 ſterling. The audience part of the houſe is circular, exceedingly neat, and holds, at the Edinburgh prices, from L. 90 to L. 100.

IT was opened*, and its performances repreſented through the ſeaſon, by a detached company occaſionally recruited from Edinburgh, where the Theatre was likewiſe open under my direction at the ſame time. But afterwards the ſeaſons of performing were ſo

* January, Anno 1781.

ſettled, that one ſet of performers ſupplied both houſes. The actors, wardrobe, and exhibitions were the ſame; its theatrical arrangements being upon a conjunct plan with that of the metropolis.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

Mrs Barresford in Edinburgh—Mrs Siddons' introduction there—Conſequences reſpecting temporary engagements—Embarraſſments attending the manager therefrom—Similar circumſtance to Mr Wilkinſon, at Beverly.

At the commencement of my management in Edinburgh, I took the liberty of circulating, as early as poſſible, the following addreſs:——

TO THE PUBLIC.

"I DO myſelf the honour of ſeizing the earlieſt opportunity of informing the LADIES and GENTLEMEN of the city of Edinburgh, that the ſuperintendence of the Theatre Royal has at length fallen to my lot. The taſk is always arduous; and, in the preſent inſtance, rendered ſtill more difficult from the ſhortneſs of the time allowed me for the neceſſary preparations for the ſeaſon, my agreement with Mr Roſs for the purchaſe of the Theatre, not

having been concluded till the 10th of the preſent month *. Even with this additional inconvenience, I embrace the ſituation with pleaſure. Naturalized, as it were, by inclination, and a long reſidence in Scotland, I cannot help looking forward with a glow of ſatisfaction, on an appointment which flatters me with a pleaſing expectation of paſſing the latter part of my life in a country, for which, from my earlieſt years, I have ever entertained the ſtrongeſt attachment.

"The difficulties I muſt neceſſarily at preſent encounter, ſhall be combated by an unremitted perſeverance. As a ſervant of the Public, I ſhall think myſelf bound, on all occaſions, to make my opinion ſubſervient to their wiſhes. A predilection to repreſentations that exhibit thoſe moral principles that the Stage was intended to promote, and a conſtant endeavour to procure the moſt capital Performers that can be had, to fill the various characters, ſhall claim my firſt attention, in the appointment of every theatrical exhibition.

"By this line of conduct, I flatter myſelf with

* November 1781.

with the hopes of ſharing ſome part of the Public Favour. To maintain and to promote that portion of their eſteem, ſhall be the conſtant and moſt ardent wiſh of

Their moſt humble
And devoted ſervant,
JOHN JACKSON."

AFTER a peruſal of the above, and upon the ſtricteſt review of the various tranſactions that have occurred through a ſeries of ſucceeding years, I cannot accuſe myſelf of having in the ſmalleſt degree ſwerved from the literal meaning, or the ſpirit of the obligation I then entered into with my ſupporters, the Public; whoſe ſervant, then, and at all times ſince, I have profeſſed myſelf to be. If, after their acquaintance with the facts herein produced, I ſhould be deemed to have been deficient either in my induſtry, or my duty, I ſhall tacitly ſubmit to the general cenſure; for on this, as on every former occaſion, it is my pleaſure, and my wiſh, to bow to the public voice.

ON a reviſion of the following names, ſelected from the numerous catalogues of others

thers now before me, I cannot entertain the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of being accuſed of not having exerted my *conſtant endeavours to procure the moſt capital performers that could be had.*

Mr Henderſon,
King,
Yates,
Holman,
Pope,
Clinch,
* Johnſon,
* Gaudry,
* Oreilly,
* Ryder,
Wilſon,
Leoni.

Mrs Yates,
Crawford,
Siddons, *three times*,
Jordan, *three times*,
Eſten, *twice*,
Miſs Farren,
George, *twice*,
Morris,
M. Farren,
Fontenelle,
* Mrs Baddeley,
Cornellys,
Brooks,
Robinſon,
Kennedy, *the ſinger*,
Barresford.

Mrs Barresford, though laſt, is not the leaſt in our eſteem. As a *reſidentiary actreſs*, I think

Thoſe marked thus * are dead.

I think I may venture to uſe the *Great Maſter-Poet's* expreſſion,

" ——————— Take her for all in all,
" I ſhall not look upon her like again."

She was the daughter of Mr Wilford, brother-in-law to Mr Rich (the celebrated *Lun*) patentee of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden. Mr Rich's country houſe was at Cowley, near Uxbridge, where I uſed to be upon a viſit for weeks together. It was there I firſt ſaw Miſs Wilford. She was then about fourteen or fifteen years of age, poſſeſſed of an elegant figure, and had every advantage of education to render her accompliſhments complete. I was preſent at her firſt exhibition as a dancer, in which ſhe excelled. She appeared as an actreſs in *Miranda*, in the Buſy Body, the ſame ſeaſon; afterwards filled a capital line of characters for many years in Covent Garden: She was the original *Miſs Hardcaſtle*, in Dr Goldſmith's She Stoops to Conquer. She graced this Theatre ſix winters. Her *Lady Racket* will be remembered as long as one of the preſent Edinburgh audience remains alive: And in *Lady Grace*, in the Journey to London, ſhe diſplayed ſuch a neatneſs of elegance, that ſhe muſt have been allowed

lowed by all to have *moved* and *looked* the very character ſhe repreſented.

AMONG the various tranſactions during the laſt ten years that have occurred, the firſt in the rotine of notice, is the introduction of Mrs Siddons to the Edinburgh ſtage, a circumſtance certainly one of the moſt material of that period. This occurrence I had looked forward to, with the moſt flattering hopes of pleaſure and advantage; to promote it, I had taken a journey on purpoſe to Dublin, during Mrs Siddons' performance in that city; and made other ſuitable efforts to induce her to pay a viſit to the Theatre of this metropolis.

THE firſt appearance of that lady upon this ſtage, was upon Saturday May 22. 1784, in the part of *Belvidera*, in the play of Venice Preſery'd.

THE public expectation was wonderfully heightened, and abundantly gratified. As a ſpectator, I was pleaſed alſo; as a manager, I fear I have found no great cauſe to rejoice. For I am not clear, notwithſtanding the large re-

ceipts

ceipts on that occaſion, that I ultimately experienced much profit.

THIS muſt have the appearance of a *ſtrong aſſertion* to thoſe of my readers, into whoſe ears it has been loudly and conſtantly trumpeted, that the manager had made mountains of money by Mrs Siddons' performance. Let us proceed to the diſcuſſion of that queſtion, pointed out by the finger of experience and proof.

THE introduction of exotics, for a ſhort period, at any Theatre out of London, muſt be attended with inconveniences to a manager, in a greater or a leſs degree, according to local circumſtances, or the temper of the times. For though the wiſhes of the audience may be thereby gratified to the uttermoſt, and the ſpirit and exertions of the manager for a moment extolled; yet the hour of reflection ſoon returns to the latter, and ſatiety and laſſitude pervades the town. The beſt ſelected pieces, moſt reſpectably caſt, are repreſented to empty benches; and the hundreds that have been taken in a week, by the attraction of merit or faſhion, are thus expended in ſup-

port of an expenſive company, through the remainder of a long and dragging ſeaſon.

Or ſhould the object not have proved productive, which, however high in eſtimation, I have ſometimes known to happen, the manager then becomes ſubject to a double loſs, and the deficiency muſt be made up from ſome other funds.

At Bath, no actor or actreſs, however popular or attractive, is permitted to perform for a few nights only. On no other conditions can they be engaged there, but for the ſeaſon; and upon ſuch terms as the emoluments of the Theatre may warrant, ſo as to coincide with the manager's advantage. "No acting there," ſays Mr Wilkinſon, "for a ſhort period, to take the cream and leave the ſkimmed milk for the manager and performers to live upon *."

Mrs Crawford, who reſided in that city the greateſt part of a winter, but a few years ago †, could procure no temporary acceſs to the Theatre. Propoſals were made to her, but

* *Mirror, or Actors Tablet, by Wilkinſon*, p. 96. † An. 1789.

but expreſsly that ſhe ſhould engage for the ſeaſon. That capital actreſs, therefore, declining all offers upon that plan, continued there, to the great loſs of the audience as well as herſelf, without having an opportunity of exhibiting her juſtly admired theatrical talents.

THE ſame maxim prevailed with the York company, till the acceſſion of Mr Wilkinſon, the preſent manager, who judged it adviſable to deviate from the long adopted mode.

"WHICH rule," he ſays, "had I abided by, thoſe ſtages (York and Hull) had been on a more ſolid foundation than at the preſent day*."

HIS reaſons for this aſſertion, I ſhall inſert in his own words. "The abſence of the reigning London favourite, leaves a cold chill and ominous ill-fated blaſt, on all theatrical culture for the year to come. It is true, by theſe advantages, plays are wonderfully altered for the better; but was I aſked, if in conſequence of ſuch good fare, are not the audi-

* *Mirror*, p. 95.

ences altered for the better alſo? I ſhould be compelled to anſwer, Indeed they are not; but far the contrary. Frequently ſeeing the beſt acting, has deſtroyed all theatrical regular reliſh. I was led formerly to believe, when I firſt began the mode of procuring principal performers from London, it would have given information to the people in general, and made more and more converts to my conventicles; but there I was egregiouſly miſtaken. For people who are not bleſſed with affluent fortunes, in the middling claſs of life, with proud minds and little ſouls, have but as much for pleaſure as they can conveniently ſpare; therefore, if they expend in one week what would ſerve for a month, for themſelves and their families purpoſes, there is likely to be a drawback. And it is ſurpriſing my own appetite did not inform me this; for if I fed one week upon pine-apples, grapes, nectarines, and peaches, I would rather go without the week following, than eat common pears, plumbs, or blackberries*."

I AM far from inſinuating, that the effects of theſe temporary theatrical viſitors ſo ſtrongly predominate in the ſcale of diſadvantage to

* *Mirror*, p. 98.

to an Edinburgh manager, as to those of York, Hull, or even of Bath. The less numerous the audiences, the more vulnerable are the directors of their amusements.

INCONVENIENCES, however, obviously do arise here. Observation before, and experience since I made the trial, have furnished me with conviction. But there is no suspending the practice; it has been begun, and must be continued. The efforts of the actors, and the liberality of the audience, in the intervening chasms, can only modify and correct it.

LUCRATIVE motives apart—The dearth of stage pieces which these periodical performances naturally occasion, proves a lasting drawback upon the greatest temporary advantage they can produce.

MRS SIDDONS' cast is *Isabella*, *Belvidera*, *Lady Randolph*, and all in that line. Mrs Jordan's the *Country Girl*, the *Miss Heydens*, and sprightly comedy. Thus, if those ladies are seen in *twelve* characters each, it proves the occcasion of *twenty-four* plays being laid upon the shelf. For so attractive have they been found in those particular performances, in which they are allowed chiefly to excel,

excel, that it would be next to an impoſſibility for the beſt *annual actreſs* that could be procured, to ſupport the ſituation of either, in the ſmalleſt degree of compariſon; or to preſerve the pieces in which they had ſo recently appeared upon the *acting ſtock liſt* of the ſeaſon.

But let us examine in what manner Mrs Siddons' firſt viſit to Edinburgh operated merely upon the receipts of the Theatre. As this is a circumſtance that has been much talked of, and, among others, for want of explanation, perhaps little underſtood, I am deſired by a perſon of ſome conſequence to be particular in its diſcuſſion.

The fame which Mrs Siddons had acquired in London was not long in travelling thus far north, and ſoon excited in the *amateurs* of the drama a wiſh to ſee her upon the Theatre; and I, on this, as well as on other occaſions, was anxious they ſhould be gratified. A leading perſon in the Parliament Houſe, diſcourſing with me upon the ſubject, propoſed, that if ſhe could be prevailed upon to come down, I ſhould be aſſiſted, for that purpoſe, with the ſum of L.200, to be raiſed by ſubſcription, and which was to be paid

paid to me in part of whatever ſum ſhould be ſtipulated for her performance, and I was recommended to make the beſt bargain I could.

In conſequence of this aſſurance, I concluded an agreement with her huſband, that Mrs Siddons ſhould perform nine nights, for which ſhe was to receive L. 400, and a *clear* benefit. A few poſts after*, I was deſired by Mr Siddons to inform him, if the two hundred pounds ſubſcription of the nobility and gentry was to go "towards the four hundred I was to give her."

I replied in return†, that "a ſet of gentlemen, in order to put it in my power to offer Mrs Siddons what might be judged worth her acceptance, had undertaken to raiſe me L. 200, which, added to the L. 200 I propoſed to give, made up the L. 400.

I soon received for anſwer, that Mrs Siddons did not chuſe to perform upon any ſtipulated ſum, but rather preferred the taking her chance

* London, February 3. † Edinburgh, February 9. 1784.

chance of the receipts, and ſuppoſed I ſhould have no objection to the change. I had now no choice; the dye was caſt; the negociation had taken wind, and had I put a negative upon the buſineſs, let my reaſons have been ever ſo good, the blame muſt have fallen upon me. And therefore, after ſome deliberation, I thought it adviſable to conſent to the change.

A LETTER from Mr Siddons* concluded the ſecond agreement, with which he declared, that "he and Mrs Siddons were extremely ſatisfied with all my treaty, and obliged to me for joining ſo readily with their laſt propoſals."

THE alteration was, that inſtead of L.400 certain, Mrs Siddons ſhould receive half of the receipts after the expences; with alſo a clear benefit. I mentioned the circumſtance to the conductor of the ſubſcription; and expreſſed my apprehenſion of its operating very ſtrongly in my diſfavour.

WITH reſpect to the two hundred pounds, I expected at any rate to have had the ſatisfaction

* April 3.

faction of paying it; and, for that purpose had a promise that the money should be lodged in my hands. But, by what means I know not, Mr Siddons received it without my knowledge or participation. This of course made a balance of L.200 in the scale of profit in Mrs Siddons' favour, over and above what accrued from the receipts of the house.

HER receipts then stood thus:——

Nine nights receipts, -	L.467	7	7
From the gentlemens subscription,	200	0	0
Benefit *(clear)* at raised prices, I presume may be rated at -	180	0	0
Presents by plate and gold tickets, I suppose could not amount to less than - -	120	0	0
	L.967	7	7
The expences of Mrs Siddons' journey were all that could be placed on the debtor side of the accompt; for her living in Edinburgh would scarcely exceed what it would have cost her in Gower Street— We shall rate them then at	50	0	0
	L.917	7	7

THUS, then, Mrs Siddons ſat down at her fire-ſide with a clear nine hundred and odd pounds, for nine nights performance.

LET us now examine into the profits of the manager.

Half of the receipts, after paying the expences, divided with Mrs Siddons,	L.467	7	7
Againſt this muſt be placed his journey to Dublin, and other extra expences, neceſſarily incurred on the occaſion, exceeding -	L.50	0	0
Mrs Siddons played for the benefit of the Infirmary, and gave her *labour gratis*. The manager gave an equal ſhare of the profits of the night, and withal the charges which he paid to the company, -	35	0	0
Mrs Siddons had a clear benefit alſo, which was to the manager,	35	0	0
	L.120	0	0
Thus the manager's clearance was	L.347	7	7

AND

And how ſoon will a continuance of loſs amount to that ſum, in an undertaking like that of Edinburgh, with a deficiency of fifty pounds a-week, as I have often experienced, with an excellent company, when the town, from ſatiety, or any other cauſe, falls into a diſinclination to viſit the Theatre?

It may here perhaps be preſumed, that ſome value ſhould be placed to the profit ſide of the manager's accompt, from a ſuppoſed overcharge in the L. 35, as the nightly expence of the houſe. To this I ſhall offer in reply, that there are extra charges that may properly be ſtiled the ſinking funds of a Theatre, which the diſintereſted ſpectator can have no conception of; which an individual performer is little acquainted with, and which the manager, who feels their weight upon the pay-day, can alone explain: ſo that avaraging the yearly expences by the number of acting nights, the medium charge, *communibus annis*, may be fairly rated at nearer L. 40 than L. 35 a night.

I shall have occaſion to ſpeak more at large upon the weekly expences of 1790, to that the reader is requeſted to refer, or to re-

main ſatisfied with this general ſtatement till he arrives there in due courſe.

I CANNOT deſert this page without obſerving, that in London the expences of benefit nights have been in my memory conſiderably heightened. When I engaged in Drury Lane, the charges were *ſixty guineas*; which I paid three ſeaſons. I afterwards paid *an hundred* for five years: and ſince that, they have been augmented, (I believe) to *an hundred and twenty* or upwards. In Edinburgh, on the building of the preſent Theatre Royal, L. 35 was adopted as a reaſonable price for a benefit (1769) and it has remained, as the ſtandard, notwithſtanding the growing increaſe of every article of expence ſince that period. I have often heard Mr Garrick and Mr Lacy complain that they loſt conſiderably by the benefits being charged ſo low; and I can ſafely aver, that, conſidering the drawbacks they are ſaddled with, the caſe has been the ſame with me.

CLEAR benefits, as they are called, are free from every expence, not only from actors ſalaries, but likewiſe from lights, printing, ſervants,

vants, and a long liſt of appendages. There are not only obviouſly attended with diſadvantage, but ſometimes with great temporary inconvenience to the manager, as they often occaſion an ill-timed vacancy in the funds of the week. So ſenſible of this were Mr King, Miſs Farren, Mrs Pope, and Mrs Eſten, that in return, they made a voluntary compliment of their performance for Mrs Jackſon, which threw ſomething in, towards the pecuniary balance in my favour.

The L. 200 ſubſcription not only rendered the inequality of emolument between the two parties ſo great, but was attended with ſuch inconveniencies in other reſpects, as will, I preſume, diſſuade the gentlemen from adopting a ſimilar meaſure on any future occaſion. Many of the members, upon the ſtrength of their ſubſcription, entertained an idea, that they were intitled to a preference of places in the boxes; and claimed, in conſequence, a right of opinion in the diſpoſal of them.

Under this ſuppoſition, a general meeting was called, at the inſtance of one of the members, by public advertiſement. A large attendance

tendance was procured; and the buſineſs fully diſcuſſed. It was determined that the ſubſcribers ſhould have no claim individually upon the boxes: That their wives and relatives, in that part of the houſe, ſhould take the general chance: And that for themſelves perſonally, a certain number of rows in the pit ſhould be ſet apart, with the privilege of entering thereto, a quarter of an hour before the other doors were opened.

VARIOUS modes were propoſed with reſpect to the arrangement of the boxes, but none of them adopted. It was at length finally reſolved, that the diſpoſal of them ſhould be left to the diſcretion of the manager.

THIS, however it might appear at the moment, proved a ſervice of danger. Notwithſtanding every precaution, miſtakes unavoidably happened. If the clerk inſerted a name by a wrong deſignation—if a letter miſcarried, or a ſervant arrived too late to ſecure the places—the whole blame centered with the manager. Even an inability to comply with a demand, was imputed to him as a fault.

MY

My not being able to perform an impoſſibility, or rather, my refuſal to do an act of injuſtice, by erazing a name, gave unpardonable offence to an individual, who, ſtrange as it may appear, threatened me at the time with the effects of his reſentment; and he kept his word. If he was not the cauſe, ſoon after, of the oppoſition to the renewal of the patent, he was at leaſt inſtrumental, to the uttermoſt of his power, in keeping up the contention.

I stand not however alone, I find, in having thus undeſervedly incurred the frowns of reſentment. A brother-manager ſuffered conſiderably on a ſimilar occaſion, from an unmerited animoſity, taken wantonly up by a perſon in power.

"The cauſe (ſays Mr Wilkinſon) of my loſing the little jewel Beverly, from the crown of my York imperial diadem, I ſhall here faithfully relate. I was up to the ears in building a new Theatre at Leeds, and in the interim tried Beverly and Hull races: At that time my leaſe for the former was nearly expired: When to my aſtoniſhment, and every perſons

perſons equal ſurpriſe, I was ordered by Colonel Appleton, then mayor, to march bag and baggage out of the town. My royalty of patents, with York in one hand, and that of Hull in the other, could not melt nor ſoften an obdurate rock, or prevail with that upright judge to deviate ſo far, as to wink at a breach of law, by ſuffering a naughty play at Beverly, though he had evidently gone nine miles from hence to Hull, for the purpoſe of ſeeing one, at which time Hull was not a patent Theatre.

"WHY a gentleman whom I never to my knowlege offended, but held in reſpectful eſteem, ſhould have uſed me thus oppreſſively, has been from that time to this inexplicable, unleſs the following circumſtance was his ground motive and reaſon for ſuch ungentlemanlike, and indeed ſuch cruel behaviour; which ſurely can only be accounted for as owing to that ſtrange turn, too often ſeen, felt and experienced from a deſpotic and proud diſpoſition.

"TWO years before, the ſaid Colonel had deſired to have a row in a ſtage box for my benefit at Hull. The places were ſet down, but

but the Colonel had not, as was, and is the uſage, ſent a ſervant to ſecure them; and it was, and is alſo the cuſtom, that at the end of the firſt act of a play, none can be kept for any rank or degree whatever. The Colonel did not arrive till the ſecond act was performing, conſequently his ſeats were filled up; and though the ladies and gentlemen in the boxes offered to make him every convenience, he would not accept it, but was highly enraged and offended, at what, in fact, was entirely his own fault. He declared he would not continue a minute longer in the Theatre, and departed inſtantly, ſwelling with dignity even to the burſting, and vowing vengeance on the Wilkinſon. The which he put in execution in the manner I have related: And it has often brought good, Shakeſpear's lines, as applicable to that powerful magiſtrate—"

" _____ Oh! 'tis excellent
" To have a giant's ſtrength! but it is tyrannous
" To uſe it like a giant."

SECT. VIII.

Renewal of the Patent—Tranſactions concerning it—The rights of the Lord Chamberlain of England, reſpecting theatrical repreſentations—Impartiality of the Duke of Grafton, in that office—Mrs Siddons again in Edinburgh—Mr Fennell there.

I WAS affected with no ſmall degree of ſurpriſe, when I underſtood that a number of gentlemen were meditating to procure a new patent, in their own names, for the Edinburgh Theatre, upon the expiration of the one then exiſting. I imagined the failure of the ſame ſcheme, in the hands of men of the firſt character and abilities in the kingdom *, would have baniſhed every idea of repeating the experiment.

A PROPOSAL was, however, tranſmitted to London, to be laid before the Lord Chamberlain

* See pages 30, 23.

lain for that purpoſe. It took no notice of *the preſent Theatre Royal, of the proprietors, ſubſcribers to it, or of Mr Jackſon the patentee.* It contained *three capital miſtakes* in point of fact, and held out a *principle* exploded in the hiſtory and practice of all the Theatres in the kingdom.

THE *firſt* of theſe miſtakes was, that David Roſs, upon the erection of the Theatre Royal, had been generouſly entruſted with the management by the public, without any valuable conſideration upon his part *.

2*dly*, THAT Mr Roſs had betrayed his truſt, by converting it into a quiet ſinecure-office of L. 500 *per annum* to himſelf †.

3*dly*, THAT Mr Jackſon had paid no valuable conſideration to Mr Roſs for a conveyance of the Theatre ‡.

4*thly*, THAT

* The high price paid for the Theatre by Mr Roſs, confutes this aſſertion, ſee page 75.

† This is likewiſe explained in page 75.

‡ The contrary of this very evidently appears in page 76. See likewiſe farther particulars in the ſection of the year 1790.

4thly, THAT upon the expiration of theatrical patents, the obtaining the next term was a matter of intereſt alone, and that the Lord Chamberlain of England was accuſtomed to grant new patents, without the leaſt regard to the property of the ſubſiſting Theatres, or the perſons concerned in them.

HAVING got notice of theſe propoſals, I made ſpecific objections to them, in which I explained the miſtake reſpecting Mr Roſs and myſelf. I alſo endeavoured to correct the error with regard to the nature of theatrical property, and to point out the more juſt and equitable practice of the Lord Chamberlain in the renovation of patents.

IN order to illucidate this, I took the liberty of obſerving, that, with great defference to the gentlemen concerned, the then ſcheme appeared to be founded upon a great *claſſical error*; or, in other words, a total forgetfulneſs of the preſent age and country. In Greece and Rome, the public furniſhed magnificent Theatres, with all their ſplendid decorations. The public, therefore, had an unqueſtionable right to the excluſive choice or nomination

of

of every perſon concerned in the conduct of theſe national ſpectacles.

But where they are provided by individuals, thoſe individuals have an undoubted right to the direction of them, guaranteed by thoſe laws, and that government under which they live, and to which they are amenable.

The intention, I reminded them, of the legiſlature, by the ſtatute made in behalf of Theatres, was not to alter the nature of theatrical property, but to protect the church and the ſtate from the petulance and abuſe which had crept into the repreſentations of the ſtage; and, that ſo long as managers and proprietors conducted the entertainments with proper decorum, it had been the equitable practice of the Lord Chamberlain of England to renew patents from time to time *to the poſſeſſors of the property*. It is this equitable right of renewal, which conſtitutes the theatrical property of Great Britain, and which without it would be of no value. The Theatres of London were ſold, a few years ago, for the great ſums of L.64,000 and L.70,000 Sterling, and

and that at a time when the term of one of the patents of thoſe houſes was within a few years of expiring*.

THE *ſcenery*, *wardrobe*, and *brick-walls*, ſold or ſeparated from the *uſe* which they ſerved for upon the ſpot, would not have brought a ſixth part of that ſum, and no man would hazard his money upon ſuch an adventure, were not the right of renewal ſo ſecured by the laws of his country.

THE Theatres of *Bath*, *Norwich*, *Cheſter*, *Hull*, *York*, *Liverpool*, &c. &c. are all upon the very ſame footing as that of Edinburgh. They are all *properties* growing in proportion to their reſpective ſituations, and the *patents have been regularly renewed to their reſpective proprietors*.

PUBLIC licences to Theatres all over Europe, are intended, and uſed for no other purpoſes, than to enſure the obſervance of propriety and

* The value of the London Theatres in the beginning of this century, did not exceed L. 5000. They aroſe to L. 12,000, then to L. 20,000, and ſo on, till they have arrived to L. 70,000 and upwards.

and decorum in the conduct of the ſtage. In England the holding Theatres under the high juriſdiction to which they are by law ſubjected, is of more importance than in other kingdoms, where the preſs is alſo under controul, becauſe the meaſure operates as a check upon authors* more than actors. With regard to the latter, the powers veſted by the act of Parliament have improved the property of the ſtage, and inſured the bread of ſuch managers as choſe to behave with propriety, and to avoid every occaſion of giving offence. The compliment paid to the Duke of Grafton, Lord Chamberlain, by Mr Colley Cibber, at the time the law paſſed, may with juſtice be continued to his ſucceſſors. "It is evident," ſays Cibber, "that the power of that white ſtaff, ever ſince it has been in the illuſtrious hand that now holds it, has been uſed with the utmoſt lenity.†"

THESE

* A licentious writer, whoſe pieces were exhibited in the Hay Market, was the occaſion of the act of Parliament: Sir Robert Walpole was the chief mark of his ſatire: "But," as Cibber ſays, in his Apology, p. 164, "he went on knocking down all diſtinctions, religion, laws, government, prieſts, judges, and miniſters."

Guſtavus Vaſa by Brook, and the Eleanora of Thomſon, were the two firſt pieces prohibited in virtue of the act.

† *Cibber's Life*, c. 10. p. 206.

THESE arguments, fraught with inſtances uncontravertable, could not fail to operate on diſintereſted and unprejudiced minds effectually in my favour. One of the principal members of the aſſociation, on making the neceſſary enquiries on that occaſion at the Lord Chamberlain's office, not only declined the buſineſs altogether, but gave his opinion decidedly againſt thoſe with whom he had acted; declaring, that the patent and the property muſt go together; and that if the gentlemen perſiſted in their intention of being concerned in the direction of the Theatre, they muſt begin with an act of juſtice; which could only be by a compromiſe with me, or a purchaſe of my theatrical rights.

THE length of time became at laſt the ſole object of debate. Sir Adam Ferguſon, who at that time was member for the city of Edinburgh, and, as ſuch, in ſome meaſure concerned, propoſed, that the renewal ſhould be in my own name, but for *ten* years only. This I refuſed, for two very obvious reaſons. Firſt, becauſe I muſt thereby have incurred more than double the expence, as it would have required two renewals inſtead of one: And, in the next

place,

place, as I deemed myſelf juſtly entitled to the uſual grant of twenty-one years. Nor was it probable the Lord Chamberlain would have conſented to the propoſal, as it would have been a direct infringement of the cuſtom of the office; twenty-one years being the conſtant and eſtabliſhed period for the renovation of theatrical patents.

Mr Walter Ross, who had an intereſt in the ſucceſs of my application, and with whom I was in the cloſeſt ties of friendſhip, was not only deſirous to bring the buſineſs to a ſpeedy concluſion, but anxiouſly wiſhed likewiſe to effect it with the approbation of all; that a cordial unanimity might be the reſult.

He therefore ſuggeſted to me, that I ſhould make a propoſal to the Duke of Hamilton, who then honoured me with his patronage, and to Mr Dundas, to have the patent taken out in their joint names; a meaſure which, he preſumed, would be the means of ſilencing the few perſevering opponents; and by which, he aſſured me, I could ſuffer no diminution of right. I had likewiſe in this inſtance an

immediate precedent; the firſt patent which I purchaſed from Mr Roſs having been taken out in the name of Henry Davidſon, Eſq.

To this I aſſented; making a perſonal requeſt to the Duke and Mr Dundas, that they would be pleaſed to hold the patent in their names; to which they favoured me with their immediate condeſcenſion.

I THEREUPON executed a deed of reſervation with reſpect to the rights of the ſubſcribers; and alſo addreſſed a letter of approbation to the Lord Chamberlain. I gave inſtructions likewiſe to Mr Seton, my ſolicitor, to diſcharge the fees of office, which was accordingly done; and the patent conſequently taken out in the names of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, and the Right Honourable Mr Dundas.

THAT ſeaſon cloſed; the next paſſed away in harmony, peace, and profit; and at no period were my proſpects of advantage fairer, or my hopes of proſperity wound up to a higher

higher pitch, than at the commencement of the ſummer 1788. I may ſafely ſay,

" 'Twas not in mortals to command ſuccefs,"

But every mode was practiſed to deſerve it.

BESIDES the firſt female luminary of the age, I had retained alſo a local favourite. Mr Fennell, who had appeared in the principal tragedy parts during the winter, was prevailed upon to continue in Scotland, purpoſely as a counterpart to Mrs Siddons. Several new pieces were in readineſs, and ſuch preparations made, as in all probability muſt have enſured a moſt brilliant ſeaſon. But, alas! who can controul his fate? The Demon of Diſcord broke in upon our repoſe, confounded our operations, and rendered nugatory our moſt earneſt endeavours.

AN offence was taken by ſome gentlemen at an expreſſion imprudently uttered by Mr Fennell, which, like a ſpark among combuſtibles, pervaded the minds of the audience, and attracted the attention of the town.

THE reſult was, the ruin of Mr Fennell;

and

and proved to the manager, not only a conſiderable pecuniary loſs, but the means likewiſe, of affixing upon him undeſerved blame, for ſuppoſed incidents in that tranſaction, that never exiſted, or in which he never in any ſhape interfered. For,

"Slander will leave ſpots, where malice finds none."

As I am now unavoidably brought forward, with reſpect to the theatrical events of my management in general, at the particular requeſt of ſome of my neareſt friends, I am perſuaded to ſubjoin a recital of that part of the buſineſs of *eighty-eight*, in which I was perſonally concerned.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

Mr Fennell in Edinburgh—Diſputes with the audience—The manager's conduct on the occaſion—Obſervations reſpecting the parts of Pierre and Jaffier—Garrick, Barry, and Moſſop, in thoſe characters—Their different powers—The manager's general arrangement of characters—Provincial Theatres more liable to diſputes reſpecting performers than thoſe of London—Annonymous letter—Its effects—The manager's apology—Mr Fennell's diſmiſſal—Conſequences to the manager—Reflections thereon—His own vindication.

TOWARDS the cloſe of the ſeaſon, (1787) Mr Fennell, without any introduction or recommendation but his own appearance and report, became known to me. I gave him a hearing; and finding in him a ſtronger dawn of theatrical merit, than in any young dramatic candidate I had ſeen ſince I became manager, I inſtantly appointed him a trial.

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THE audience approved of him; and from their approbation, I entered into an engagement with him for the next ſeaſon, under the penalty of two hundred pounds. He went upon a viſit to ſome friends in London, where he was introduced to Mr Harris, who entertaining the ſame idea of his abilities with myſelf, immediately brought him forward in the character of *Othello*, in the Theatre Royal of Covent Garden, where his theatrical merit received the public ſanction. He afterwards performed *Alexander*, *Jaffier*, and *Macbeth*.

IN *Jaffier*, the only part I ſaw him in there, he was received with univerſal marks of approbation and applauſe: and, I muſt confeſs, it was no ſmall ſatisfaction to me, that Scotland had been his nurſery, and that I ſhould have had the honour of rearing the plant.

THE two hundred pounds penalty was offered me, and any larger ſum I ſhould think reaſonable, by way of damages, provided I would give up his article. I, on the part of the Public of Edinburgh, and myſelf, declined the propoſal; and Mr Fennell, on his part, had more honour than to break an engage-

ment;

ment, once entered into, however diſadvantageous to his own views his adhering to it might have proved.

Mr Fennell continued the winter with me in Edinburgh; and I muſt do him the juſtice to ſay, that he attended to his buſineſs, in every inſtance, with the niceſt punctuality. He was never abſent at *one* rehearſal; and chearfully undertook, at the ſhorteſt notice, every part aſſigned to him.

Mrs Siddons having been engaged here for the ſummer, I prevailed upon Mr Fennell to ſtay in Scotland till after the races; and though Mrs Siddons' arrival, from the illneſs of her ſon, was delayed a month longer than Mr Fennell expected, he ſtill, without reluctance, continued in Edinburgh, and undertook many laborious new parts, in the different plays that were *intended* to have been performed.

I am thus particular in reſpect to Mr Fennell's behaviour antecedent to this diſpute, in order to explain my conduct towards him; and to remove, or rather juſtify the charge of par-

partiality, or favouritiſm, of which I had been accuſed.

PARTIALITY, I preſume, may be praiſe-worthy, as well as cenſurable. I attempted to cheriſh the ſtage abilities I ſaw in Mr Fennell; and in this I ſurely ſtept not out of the line of my duty. It is a manager's buſineſs to ſearch for, and to encourage riſing merit, wherever it exiſts; and whenever the ſame theatrical abilities ſhall ſtand forward to my knowledge, they ſhall receive the like partiality from me to introduce them to public notice.

IN caſting the play of Venice Preſerv'd, I gave the part of *Jaffier* to Mr Fennell, and that of *Pierre* to Mr Woods; as being, in my opinion, after very mature deliberation, the only way, as my company then ſtood, the two characters could moſt properly be arranged.

ON my arrival from London, I was informed that Mr Bland had, at Mr Fennell's requeſt, told Mr Woods, that if he deſired it, he was willing to change parts, provided the manager conſented. This Mr Woods declined,

ed. Mr Fennell, in relating the circumſtance to me, declared, that though he had performed the one, and the other was quite new to him, he had no objection to the change.

THOUGH the alteration was againſt my own judgment, as I thought the parts ſtood beſt as they were, yet the morning before the rehearſal, eight days previous to the play's being performed, and indeed it might have been put off eight days longer, I told Mr Woods, that, " not having the moſt diſtant intention of giving him uneaſineſs, if he had the leaſt wiſh to perform *Jaffier*, in preference to *Pierre*, I knew Mr Fennell had no objection to the latter; and that before the play was rehearſed, I would, if he pleaſed, reverſe the parts." He replied, " That, as he had ſtudied the character, he would play it."

THE tragedy of Venice Preſerv'd was therefore advertiſed for repreſentation, as originally caſt*.

FROM this circumſtance aroſe a contention, that was attended with very ſerious conſequences.

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* Wedneſday, July 9. 1788.

ſequences. The progreſs of the diſpute, the three nights it laſted, till it ended in a very diſagreeable affray, I ſhall paſs over in ſilence; a minute detail of thoſe facts, by Mr Fennell, having been laid before the public.

An anonymous letter, in a very illiberal ſtile*, gave me the firſt intimation of a premeditated ſcheme to diſturb the performance of that evening. The cauſe aſſigned was, that Mr Woods had performed the character of *Jaffier*, and, for that reaſon, Mr Fennell ſhould not be permitted to proceed in the part.

The purport of this letter appeared to me the more ſingular, as Mr Fennell had repeatedly performed the character the preceding winter in Edinburgh, and afterwards in London, as I before obſerved, with the greateſt applauſe; and undoubtedly, with reſpect to perſonal accompliſhments, was the actor, of all others then in Scotland, who could beſt figure with Mrs Siddons; and who, without laying any violent reſtraint upon our ideas, might juſtly be ſuppoſed to have

" ——————— daſh'd the ſaucy waves,
" That throng'd and preſs'd to rob him of his prize."

I con-

* Vide Appendix, No. VIII.

I CONSIDERED the character of *Jaffier* likewiſe more in Mr Fennell's mode of acting, than that of *Pierre*, though I knew he differed with me in opinion on that point. The part of *Pierre*, too, being in that line of playing in which Mr Woods is generally allowed to excel, I deemed him the only perſon in my company to fill that character with propriety.

Pierre and *Jaffier*, in the eſtimation of the theatrical world, are equal in rank, and excel each other in repreſentation only, as the particular talents of the actor elevate or leſſen in the idea of the ſpectator, the importance of which-ever part he aſſumes. I have ſeen Garrick and Barry alternately in both parts, and the candid critic was doubtful where to beſtow the preference.

MR MOSSOP, indeed, raiſed the character of *Pierre* beyond all reach, and left any *Jaffier* I ever ſaw with him at a diſtance: But, had he attempted *Jaffier*, I am confident he would, with Barry in *Pierre*, have ſtood far behind.

I MENTION theſe circumſtances, I preſume, not improperly, as I thereby only mean to

ſhew, that in the diſtribution of the characters, I was not inattentive to the abilities of each performer; and aſſigned the parts impartially, and with no other view than the general advantage of the evening's performance.

I CANNOT help here expreſſing my ſurpriſe, at the impolicy of any individual, or ſet of individuals, who would wiſh to obtrude themſelves upon the public, as cenſors to the Theatre, to begin their improvements by the creation or adoption of a rule that muſt prove of the moſt fatal tendency to the audience, as well as the manager.

THE appropriation of parts to particular actors, would at once efface the force of novelty from the performances; and render nugatory the efforts of a manager either to ſtrengthen his exhibitions by a variation of character, or an introduction of any new face.

IN vain might Meſſrs King and Holman be brought down from London, with great pains and expence by the manager, if the performers in each of their lines were to be aſked per-

permiſſion for them to appear in their favourite characters. One reſidentiary actor being in poſſeſſion of the enfeebled fops, and another of the lovers in tragedy, *Lord Ogleby* would be precluded by the one, and *Romeo* by the other.

THE propagating a belief of the mere exiſtence of ſuch a theatrical cuſtom, muſt certainly be highly intereſting to any individual performer, who, having gained an eſtabliſhment in this or any other city, at a diſtance from the metropolis of England, might find it accord with his views of ſettlement, to have it thought a branch of the theatrical ſyſtem, that parts having been once played, and therefore poſſeſſed (as he would term it) by one, cannot be taken away by the manager, and given to another, without a breach of the fundamental laws of the Theatre.

How a cuſtom of this kind, once eſtabliſhed, would operate with reſpect to the manager, we have in part obſerved. It is neceſſary, however, we ſhould deſcend a little to the minutiæ of its effects.

SHOULD

SHOULD the maxim above mentioned be adopted, the having a numerous and ſtrong, or a weak and thin company, would be equally the ſame: The expence of half a dozen large ſalaries, would be an unneceſſary burden upon the manager; and the engaging a good or a bad company muſt be of equal tendency to the public.

IF the part of *Richard* alone is to be attended to, and of ſix reſpectable actors belonging to the company, one only is to be the hero of the play, and the other five, in conſequence of having once played the firſt character in the piece, are to be indulged with the pleaſure of ſitting ſtill; what is to become of *King Henry*, *Buckingham*, *Richmond*, and even *Treſſel*? they muſt, of courſe, be filled up by walking gentlemen and meſſage-bearers, and their places again ſupplied by ſcene-ſhifters and mutes; while the GREAT ACTORS of the company, in the upper boxes, are lookers on; and ſtand forward among the foremoſt, to ridicule the induſtrious underlings, who are uſing their beſt endeavours to ſtruggle through the parts for which they are unfit. This practice, once acceded to, how far

far might not its miſchievous effects be extended?

AN actor, who had formerly played the *Ghoſt*, having, a few ſeaſons ago, at a provincial Theatre, performed the part of *Hamlet*, when the company returned to the head quarters at Edinburgh, and the play of Hamlet was ordered into rehearſal, the country *Hamlet* ſent in, as an excuſe for his non-attendance, that having once acted the part of *Hamlet*, he could not poſſibly think of demeaning himſelf ſo far, as to appear again in the *Ghoſt*. Let the reader figure to himſelf the embarraſſment of a manager, on receiving five other remonſtrances almoſt at the ſame time, and much to the ſame purport. *Horatio* had performed *Hamlet* at Aberdeen, the *King* at Montroſe, *Laertes* at Dundee, *Oſtrick* at Perth, and the *Player King* at Stirling. They are inexorable full of the ſame importance; one and all, with one voice, cry out, *Hamlet*, or nothing!

WHAT is the manager to do in this caſe? he muſt either lay poor *Hamlet* on the ſhelf, or dreſs up ſome of his attendants and lamplighters

lighters to fill up the characters in one of Shakeſpear's firſt plays; or be reduced to the neceſſity of adopting Mr Foote's mode of creating actors, by filling up the deficiency with a number of paſte-board figures; which would not perhaps be eſteemed a very pleaſing expedient by the audience of Edinburgh.

FAR-STRAINED as this anecdote may appear, as ſuppoſed perhaps to have been adduced only for the ſake of argument, I here declare, the firſt ſeaſon I was manager in Edinburgh, I had ſix *Hamlets* in my company; but from the above very nice punctilio of not deſcending to an inferiour part, I was compelled to lay aſide the play for want of performers that whole winter.

PARTICULAR agreements had been made by my predeceſſor, and I was at that period obliged to comply.

THE pernicious tendency of this ſyſtem at the commencement of my firſt managerial campaign in this Theatre, ſhewed me at once the baneful effects it muſt ever be attended with,

with, both to the audience and the manager: And from that moment its exiſtence on the Edinburgh ſtage was exploded.

For theſe ten years it has been a declared and an avowed rule of this Theatre, that when a performer of ſuppoſed ſuperior merit makes his appearance, thoſe in his line are to give way; a general alteration in the caſt of characters conſequently takes place, according to the ſituation of the company; and however an individual performer may be diſpleaſed at the change, his feelings muſt neceſſarily yield to the accommodation of the whole.

Let me not on this point be miſunderſtood. I would not have it ſuppoſed that when a new performer appears in the part of *Othello*, I could poſſibly propoſe the actor who played it before ſhould deſcend into a ſilent ſenator. There is a line beyond which no impartial or prudent manager will ſtep. In the changing *Jaffier* for *Pierre* (as in the preſent inſtance) *Brutus* for *Mark Antony* or *Caſſius*, *Caſtalio* for *Chamont* or *Polydore*, &c. &c. the actor can ſuffer no diminution of rank. In ſecondary parts likewiſe, where it is neceſ-

ſary for carrying on, or more properly arranging the buſineſs, the uſeful performers may be removed or changed on any emergency, without degradation as to ſituations or conſequence. By drawing ſteadily and amicably together only, can a ſtrong company render a performance reſpectable, be of utility to a manager, and afford ſatisfaction to an applauding public.

For the above motives the ſame cuſtom was eſtabliſhed in the two Theatres in London: And it is now no unuſual thing in the bills, to ſee an almoſt total new arrangement of characters by the ſame performers, and in the ſame pieces, that have been differently repreſented for ſeaſons before.

It appears to me a moſt ſtrange and improbable idea, that any man, or ſet of men, coming to the Theatre, with a play-bill in their hands, ſhould be induced by the mere motives that can actuate any part of an unbiaſſed audience, to call out to a manager for a reverſal of the characters ſo ſpecified in the bills of the day.

An

An unprejudiced public, who viſit a theatre with an intention to be pleaſed, will not lightly adopt any haſty and violent meaſures, either in maltreating an actor who is exerting his beſt endeavours to afford them pleaſure, or in forcibly deranging the regulations adopted by a manager, who is anxiouſly and unremittingly labouring in their ſervice.

Some ſecret ſtimulation, or ſiniſter motive, muſt actuate the boſom of him, who can be induced to ſtep forward in ſo ſingular a manner, as to retard a performance, and break in upon the peace of the houſe, without a very glaring piece of offence on the ſide of the performer, or ſome flagrant, unpopular and perſevering miſconduct of the manager. I ſpeak this not from theory, my opinion is grounded upon practice and theatrical experience, which has not been ſmall, or of a ſhort duration.

So early as the year fifty-ſeven, I was introduced to, and was for ſeveral years the intimate acquaintance of Mr Rich. I was an admitted friend of the family on all occaſions; and being permitted to become a party in

the converſations of the manager with the firſt actors of the day, I had conſequently no ſmall opportunity of being early initiated into the myſteries of the interiour politics of the ſtage.

I WAS at that period favoured with the freedom of the Theatre of Covent Garden, both before and behind the curtain; a privilege, which, by ſucceeding managers, has been unremittingly continued to me. I was honoured with the ſame terms of intimacy by Mr Garrick at Drury Lane, which I enjoyed to the day of his death.

I WAS for ſome time concerned in the management in Dublin; and for ten years paſt, have neceſſarily gained ſome little knowledge in my official capacity in this Theatre. In all that period, not one inſtance occurred that could induce me to change my ſentiments on the ſubject: And the opinion I had thus formed has been lately confirmed by the firſt theatrical authority now living.

RIOTOUS atempts in behalf of, or in oppoſition to any eſtabliſhed performer in London, have

have been very rare. One inſtance only, that of Mr Lee, at preſent occurs to my remembrance, which happened, I think, in the year fifty-eight, (of which I was an eye-witneſs). It appeared evidently a partial combination. It laſted only one night, and that for a very ſhort ſpace. The friends of the Theatre proved victorious, and detection and diſappointment to the aggreſſors were the reſult.

In provincial Theatres, the audiences are more limited, and the reſtrictions of the actors leſs aſcertained. There a performer, even with a ſmall degree of merit, and ſome addreſs, finds it no very difficult matter, if he lays himſelf out for the purpoſe, to be introduced into company, and to obtain an acquaintance. This point eſtabliſhed, his protection from the partiality of the friends he has gained, becomes ſecure.

He holds his ſituation, plays his rotine of characters, and, wrapt in ſecurity, laughs at ſuperior merit. He is eſteemed a *Bon Vivant*, and a good kind of man; and, in ſpite of the abilities of a ſtranger, tenfold in compariſon

to

to what he poſſeſſes, muſt have the prefe-rence.

THUS the partial and limited ideas of the partizans on one ſide, and the broad and general opinion of thoſe on the other, muſt immediately claſh, and conſequently create animoſities and party diſputes in a narrow circle, which, in a wider and more extended ſcale, can ſeldom, and that with difficulty, exiſt.

THE diſturbance in the Edinburgh Theatre in 1788, was certainly very prematurely entered upon by the original aggreſſors; I mean the anonymous letter-writers, and firſt oppoſers of the performance of Venice Preſerved. Prior to the diſpute, indeed before the the above play, which gave riſe to it, was advertiſed, a gentleman meeting me accidentally in the ſtreet, enquired of me, "Who was to do *Jaffier*?" I told him, "Mr Fennell." He replied, "Mr Woods has played the part." "Yes," I anſwered, "he has, and very reſpectably; and ſo has Mr Fennell. But my opinion is, that Mr Fennell ſhould do *Jaffier*, and Mr Woods *Pierre*, as being the beſt manner the parts could be caſt."

HERE

HERE the converſation upon that ſubject ended. Had that gentleman then been ſo candid as to have acquainted me, that he and a few friends of Mr Woods, wiſhed to ſee him in *Jaffier*, I ſhould as candidly have informed him of the exact ſtate of my ſituation in that reſpect; that Mr Fennell really wiſhed, and requeſted, to play *Pierre;* but that Mr Woods having had the part given to him, and having ſtudied it, was averſe to the change.

I SHOULD likewiſe have acquainted him, that it was my moſt anxious deſire, my intereſt, and my duty, to caſt the plays as ſhould be deemed moſt acceptable to the public; whoſe voice was, and always ſhould be, a law with me; and whatever performer they moſt approved of, they ſhould certainly ſee. My opinion in this caſe would have been, that the two competitors ſhould have played the parts alternately, and which-ever actor the audience moſt approved, ſhould certainly have retained the part.

A DECLARATION of this kind from me, at that period, would, I preſume, have ſatisfied the gentleman and his friends, and might poſſibly have

have prevented the diſagreeable meaſures that ſucceeded. The anonymous letter-writer would have been ſpared ſome trouble; Mr Fennell might perhaps have proceeded in his duty, without the appearance of diſapprobation; and the calling out for the manager would have been rendered unneceſſary, by the foregoing information.

THE anonymous letter before mentioned, I ſhould have paſſed over in ſilence, as I do numbers in the courſe of a ſeaſon*, had I not deemed it neceſſary to put Mr Fennell on his guard, ſhould any attempt be made by the writer or his adherents to carry thoſe threats expreſſed in his letter into execution.

IN the progreſs of the diſpute, the ground of quarrel was changed, and, at a very early period, the contention aſſumed a very different aſpect, the original cauſe having been loſt in ſubſequent conſequences. The quarrel now, was an offence taken by a reſpectable ſociety at an expreſſion dropt in the courſe of the diſpute by Mr Fennell. The diſcuſſion of this point I ſhall not enter upon; as I mean to

* Vide Appendix, No. IX.

to confine myſelf to thoſe parts of the contention only, in which I was involved.

On the Wedneſday morning, a requiſition* was ſent me, ſigned by a number of reſpectable gentlemen, with which I thought it a duty incumbent upon me to comply.

Mr Fennell having refuſed to accede to the terms of accommodation propoſed, on Wedneſday evening I addreſſed the audience in the following words:—

Gentlemen,

"I am exceedingly ſorry, that through the whole courſe of my conduct, as manager, during the late diſputes at the Theatre, I ſhould, in any one inſtance, have been ſuppoſed to have taken part with Mr Fennell, in an improper manner. I have the higheſt veneration for this audience. It is, it has been, and ever ſhall be, my fixed reſolution, to preſerve, as much as poſſible, a due reſpect to the public; and if, on this occaſion, in the minuteſt circumſtance, I ſhould have been conſidered as having failed in my duty, it was unintentional, and I am ſorry for it.

* Vide Appendix, No. X.

LADIES and GENTLEMEN,

"IT gives me inexpreſſible concern, to be under the diſagreeable neceſſity of informing you, that, till this unhappy diſpute is ſettled, *Mr Fennell is withdrawn.*"

THIS apology put a period to the diſturbances in the Theatre; and Mr Fennell's diſmiſſion gave peace to the contending parties. But peace came not to me. Tranquillity is ſeldom, very ſeldom, the lot of a manager. Mr Garrick, in ſome of his writings, ſays, that the plagues of management, in one year, are ſufficient to expiate a whole life of ſin.

MR GARRICK's unpleaſing dilemmas could ariſe from managerial embarraſſments merely; from the impediments to ſtage-arrangements; from the diſcontent of ſome diſappointed actor, or the caprice of actreſſes; of the latter, to my knowledge, he had frequently his ſhare: But he had no diſquietudes from money-concerns. From a long flow of proſperity, and the tide of ſucceſs, his coffers were full; mine were nearly exhauſted: And my pecuniary adjuſtments were ſo totally overturned by this untoward cir-

circumſtance, that I was obliged to ſtruggle through the greateſt difficulties to provide for the deficiency—a deficiency ſo conſiderable, that, ſhould I mention the ſum, it would ſcarcely be believed. And yet when it is conſidered that I loſt a whole week of Mrs Siddons' performance; that the popular new pieces, that had been preparing for months, and for which Mr Fennell had been retained in Edinburgh from the cloſe of the winter ſeaſon, were obliged to be laid aſide; that his removal from the old pieces created a vacancy, which, at the diſtance of four hundred miles from London, I could not poſſibly in a moment fill up; and when, to theſe conſiderations, I add the very great defalcation in my receipts to the repeated plays, and likewiſe obſerve, that the ſame cauſe operated in Glaſgow, the loſs cannot poſſibly be rated at a triſle.

I WAS the more diſappointed on this head, as I had begun to build, and made purchaſes in the public ſervice, that, from no unreaſonable calculation, had the ſeaſon gone ſmoothly through, would have been, as far as I expected, made up. For a well cultivated harveſt

was coming forward, and I had no ſuſpicion of ſo unnatural a *blaſt*.

A PECUNIARY deficiency on this occaſion, was not my only grievance. Prejudices had taken root; and a diſſemination of diſlikes is ſometimes more detrimental than a defalcation of finance.

" Good name, in man and woman,
" Is the immediate jewel of our ſouls.
" Who ſteals my purſe, ſteals traſh; 'tis ſomething, nothing;
" 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been ſlave to thouſands.
" But he who ſilches from me my good name,
" Robs me of that which not enriches him,
" And makes me poor indeed."

THROUGH the whole progreſs of this unfortunate buſineſs, I am not conſcious of having acted unbecoming my ſituation in any reſpect. From its origin to the concluſion, I laboured to prevent its effects. I remonſtrated with Mr Fennell on the ſtage; I procured an interview for him with gentlemen of the law, of eminence and rank; and on the morning of the day on which I was to pronounce the diſagreeable ſentence, I wrote him a letter of ſome length, conjuring him to conſider his own ſituation,

ſituation, to reflect upon mine, and, by every tie of gratitude to the public, and friendſhip to me, that he would make the required ſubmiſſion, which, though bitter at preſent, would ſweeten his future purſuits in life, and be the ſure road to popularity and fame.

THE moſt apparent culpable circumſtance then adduced to my charge, was, that four or five gentlemen, avowed partizans of Mr Fennell, appeared in one of the ſide-boxes, the laſt night of the diſpute, and that they were placed there by my direction. It is true the gentlemen came there, but not by my appointment.

THE circumſtance above alluded to happened from the company in a ſide-box joining that of a lady in the balcony, thereby occaſioning a vacancy below, of which the gentlemen before mentioned availed themſelves. In this tranſaction, I was by no means inſtrumental; nor could I have prevented it from taking place, however I might have been inclined to it.

THE

THE ſeats were arranged* *at ſeven o'clock in the morning*, and the ladies names inſerted in the plan of the houſe. No place, therefore, could poſſibly have been given that day, with any party deſign whatſoever, as, till paſt five o'clock in the afternoon, I had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of any diſturbance being intended that evening; being fully convinced, in my own mind, that all differences had been finally adjuſted the preceeding play night.

BUT, granting the contrary to have been the caſe, that I had ſuſpected the diſturbances of the former nights were to be renewed, and had conſequently taken meaſures to ſecure the property, and to protect the peace of the houſe, the tranſaction was ſurely a moſt natural one, and might eaſily be juſtified upon the principles of ſelf-preſervation.

THE conduct adhered to by the London managers, on the like occaſion, is the only precedent we can apply to. There, on the leaſt ſhadow of a diſturbance being meditated, meaſures the moſt effectual are adopted to counteract its effects.

IF

* See Appendix, No. XI.

If a new play is intended to be run down, a young actor exploded, or any arrangement of the managers is expected to be oppoſed, from private animoſity, partial pique, or particular whim, the friends of the Theatre are immediately applied to, and ſtationed in groups in every part of the houſe; there joining the plaudits of the unbiaſſed auditors, they openly exert their influence in ſupport of the meaſure, without ever being deemed culpable for their interference, or any blame being thrown upon the manager for ſeeking their ſupport.

This, however, was not my conduct; nor were any extraordinary exertions on my ſide practiſed on that occaſion. And I flatter myſelf, I can at this moment ſay, what I believe few managers, after ſuch an unfortunate diſturbance, would have been able to have ſaid,

That I did not prepare my door-keepers in the front of the houſe, or my ſervants behind the curtain, for any offenſive or defenſive meaſures whatſoever.

* See Appendix, No. XL.

That

THAT I did not admit a *ſingle perſon* clandeſtinely into any part of the houſe, either before the doors were opened, or by any other ſecret mode.

THAT there was not *one* perſon introduced into the audience part of the houſe, by orders, or any other means, that did not abſolutely pay for admiſſion: Nor did any perſon enter the houſe, even by payment, colluſively with my knowledge.

AND, with theſe declarations, I ſhall bid adieu to the ſubject.

SECT.

SECT. X.

Theatrical ſeaſon of eighty-nine ſucceſsful—That of ninety not ſo—Reaſons why—Deficiency in the manager's finances—Cauſes thereof—Annual receipts and expenditures of the Theatre—Nightly expences—General ſtatement of funds and diſburſements—Effects of the Circus upon the Theatre Royal.

THE Edinburgh theatrical ſeaſon of *eighty-nine* paſſed over not diſadvantageouſly with reſpect to pecuniary matters. Mr King's well known and eſtabliſhed abilities operated very powerfully towards augmenting the receipts; and the habits of friendſhip which ſubſiſted betwixt that gentleman and myſelf, rendered more light the cares and fatigues of ſtage buſineſs.

THE year ninety commenced with the repreſentation of the dramatic pantomimical ſpectacle of the Deſtruction of the Baſtile, under the title of *Liberty Triumphant*, and the aſſemblage of a moſt numerous and excellent company, as the reader muſt have noticed

from a perusal of the *dramatis personæ* of that season.

It will undoubtedly in this place be deemed necessary, that I should say something explanatory of the causes that brought on those derangements of my finances which at that period commenced. My own feelings, were no such explanation expected, would prompt me to the measure.

Amidst that variety of unpleasing sensations, which, in the situation I was in, must unavoidably have pervaded my mind, there was one of a different tendency, which invariably afforded me no small consolation and support. It was a satisfaction, in my own breast, arising from the knowledge of never having appropriated a single shilling to any other purpose than the carrying on, and extending the theatrical plan in which I have been engaged. If either now, or hereafter, any thing to the contrary of this declaration should appear, I am content to lose the good opinion of every one concerned; of which, after the explanation I am about to give shall have been fairly understood, I flatter myself with the hopes of being fully possessed.

In

In order more clearly to aſcertain the validity of this aſſertion, I muſt remind the public of Edinburgh of the ſituation in which I found the Theatre. I cannot deviſe any thing ſo wretched. There were neither ſcenes, wardrobe, or any other appendage ſuitable to a Theatre Royal. There was not even a roof; the thing ſo called was like a ſieve, which let the rain through in a million of places.

With the houſe in this deranged ſtate, I commenced manager. From the engagements my predeceſſor had entered into, compriſing a liſt of many reſpectable names, but not one that poſſeſſed the powers of attraction, or, in the theatrical phraſe, that was a *drawing object*, I loſt from two to three hundred pounds*; and before the end of the year, with painting, machinery, wardrobe, decorations, and repairs, I was above a thouſand pounds in advance. From that period I have brought down almoſt every actor or actreſs of conſequence, that London could produce*. By ſome of theſe I profited; by ſeveral I loſt conſiderably: And during no one ſeaſon ſince

* Anno 1782. † See the ten years liſt.

I commenced manager have I received as much money as I expended upon the general plan.

I WOULD not here be ſuppoſed to inſinuate that I never had any profit; that would be far wide of my meaning, and render the ſubject in contention obviouſly not worth the poſſeſſion. After the common occurrences of ſalaries, and every other weekly expenditure, I certainly had a gain. And could I have contented myſelf with carrying on the theatrical plan on the ſame confined ſcale in which I found it, this vindication had been rendered unneceſſary. But I had an ambition, and a laudable one, I preſume, it will be deemed, however, from unexpected conſequences, it may, for the preſent, have failed in its effect. I longed to ſee the Theatre of Edinburgh on a footing with the reſt of the city; and wiſhed it to proceed in its improvements in an equal degree. With that view, I erected a colonade at the north end of the houſe, for which a ſubſcription was entered into, and, in all probability, would ſoon have been filled, had it not been niped in the very bud, by the theatrical contentions in 1788. Thoſe unfortu-

nate

nate diſputes not only rendered the ſubſcription totally abortive, ſaddling me, by that means, with the whole expence of the building, but brought upon me various inconveniences and loſſes. I had meditated further improvements upon the Theatre, ornamental as well as uſeful; the propriety of which meaſure cannot be better aſcertained, than by informing the reader, that the buildings are now carrying on upon the ſame plan, from a conviction of the advantage and utility of the meaſure.

I AM aware, that it may be obtruded upon me as a fault, that I ſhould ſo eagerly run into thoſe extraneous projects (as they may be termed) that muſt neceſſarily bear ſo hard upon my finances.

THE neceſſity of my procuring Theatres for my company to perform in, when that of Edinburgh was ſhut, is an unanſwerable argument in favour of my ſtraining every nerve to get a houſe at Aberdeen, which, with thoſe of Edinburgh, Glaſgow, and Dundee, would have formed a compact and regular ſcheme; would have produced a yearly ſalary

to

to the performers; and conſequently rendered the Edinburgh theatrical plan complete.

THIS neceſſary and laudable endeavour led me into great and numerous expences; which, however, were not run into haſtily, but upon very mature deliberation; and under the ſtrongeſt aſſurance of a pecuniary ſupport, to no inconſiderable amount. *In that I was diſappointed;* and from that diſappointment the deficiency in my finances aroſe.

The ſum total of the nightly receipts of the year 1789, was -	L. 5180	5	0
The current expences, - -	4454	1	5
Profit, —	L. 726	3	7

Nightly receipts of 1790, -	L. 5275	8	6
Expences, - - - -	5297	1	11
Loſs, —	L. 21	13	5

THE particular articles in theſe accompts have undergone a long and a cloſe inveſtigation; and are now open for the inſpection of thoſe, whoſe intereſt or curioſity urges them to the trouble of a peruſal.

IN

In the above annual ſtatements, there are no ſalaries put down for myſelf or Mrs Jackſon, in order to ſwell up the ſum: No allowance for keeping up the wardrobe; for the expence of the company's journeys; for the loſs of the ſummer vacations, for want of a circular yearly plan*; which has coſt me ſo much, in endeavouring to obviate, by building at Aberdeen.

There are alſo in thoſe accompts payments for items entirely unconnected with the weekly accompts, to the amount of L. 2093 : 8 : 9½.

My weekly expences to performers this winter, 1790, were	L. 100	3	0
For rents, eſtimated at 600l. a-year, muſic, ſervants, lights, printing, advertiſements, and incidents, - -	60	5	0
	L. 160	8	0

Nightly expences, at three nights a-week, - - -	L. 54	2	8
At four nights a-week, - -	40	2	0

Caſh

* The loſs of the autumn vacation 1788, was more than L. 100, and that of 1791, above L. 200.

Caſh paid for different properties, houſes, lands, and appendages.

Ground eaſt of the Edinburgh Theatre, - - - -	L. 550	0	0
Dr Dryſdale's houſe, to procure the ſervitude upon the ground, the whole purchaſe L. 500, paid -	200	0	0
Roofing, repairs, and neceſſary alterations to the Theatre, -	500	0	0
Annuities in conſequence of purchaſe of the Theatre, - -	2700	0	0
To proprietors, arrears of intereſt,	500	0	0
Painting of the Theatres, and ſcenery,	800	0	0
Machinery, canvas, timber, furniture, wardrobe, carpeting, cordage, and iron work, -	2000	0	0
Money loſt, by advance to performers, . -	500	0	0
Fees and expences of patent, .	300	0	0
Shares of Theatre purchaſed, .	340	0	0
Property on Leith Walk, -	105	0	0
The Glaſgow property, more than	3000	0	0
Paid for property, buildings, and arrears, at Aberdeen, .	500	0	0
	L. 11,995	0	0

THESE

THESE totals of the receipts and diſburſements, the particulars of which, though too voluminous to be here inſerted, are, as before obſerved, open for inſpection, muſt, at firſt ſight, diſpel that impulſe of ſurpriſe I have frequently heard ſtarted, at what could have become of the *vaſt ſums* taken at the doors? The wonder on this occaſion ought rather to be, how I could pay ſo large a ſum; as, from the ſtatement produced, it could not poſſibly ariſe out of the profits of the Theatre:—Moſt certainly upon intereſt; by the aſſiſtance of my friends; and the poſtponing other payments, which unavoidably brought me into thoſe arrears that fell at laſt ſo heavily upon me.

I MUST here alſo obſerve, that previous to opening the Theatre (1790), I judged it neceſſary to be as ſtrong as poſſible, on account of the oppoſition at the Circus preparing againſt me. With that view, I brought forward, from models procured at London, the *Baſtile*, which was drawing overflows to the ſeveral Theatres where it was then repreſenting.

THOUGH expenſively got up, and excellently performed, with a variety of coſtly ſcenery and apparatus, it had not the expected attraction here. This, with other preparations and expences, at the commencement of the ſeaſon, coſt upwards of L. 300.

I MADE the greateſt exertions too, in procuring a company; and proved ſucceſsful. I think, I can truly aſſert, that a completer one has not been ſeen in Edinburgh. That of Mr Foote's was the only one that can poſſibly ſtand in competition with it. For the ſatisfaction of the reader, I have placed a compariſon betwixt the two in the Appendix*.

MY expences were however of courſe proportionably high†; and my receipts, thoſe of the galleries, particularly, being thinned by the Circus, I conſequently loſt upon the whole, as has been already ſtated, L. 21 : 13 : 5, excluſive of the neceſſary repairs upon the Theatre, wardrobe, and ſcenery, and expence of my family. This loſs, ſo cauſed by the drain of caſh going conſtantly to the Circus, was evidently the occaſion of my being ſtraitened

* See No. VII. † See page 183.

ened at the close of the season; for, at a moderate calculation, not of my own stating, I could not have had less than L. 700 or L. 800, drawn out of the receipts I might reasonably have expected, provided there had been no such attraction against me. And that sum, making the profits upon a par* with the former year, would have answered every demand that would then have been made upon me.

HERE again it may reasonably be suggested, why did I extend my expences farther than the receipts would defray? My reply to this is, that prior contracts had been entered into; bills accepted at Aberdeen on account of the house erecting there; for arrears of materials of various kinds; painting and repairs requisite for keeping open the different Theatres in my possession, not included in the current expences of the week. My bill to one artist alone was L. 1000 : 0 : 6, of which L. 635 : 16 : 6 was paid.

A PERSON who enters upon a farm, under the hopes of holding it for life, however despoiled, and run out by rack-renters and year-

* L. 704 : 10 : 2.

ly tenants, it may be found by the new comer, he nevertheleſs looks forward to the future produce he expects; and, under the hopes of enjoying a plentiful return, purſues his adopted plan of cultivation and improvements, to the very extent of his power and abilities. He rears up fences and plantations, erects buildings, and ſubjoins every needful appendage thereto. If permitted by providence, or man, to enjoy the fruits of his labour, he ſoon begins to find his induſtry rewarded; the original expenditure every year diminiſhes; and a regular and permanent advantage finally enſues.

But if by ſome unrelenting creditor, or the cruelty of an hard-hearted landlord, he is compelled to give up his poſſeſſion, his expectations are in an inſtant blaſted; and he beholds, with a mortifying concern, the produce of his well cultivated incloſures carried in by another; while he himſelf is compelled to wander to ſome barren forſaken ſoil, to prepare freſh harveſts, perhaps for ſome new invader.

In a like ſituation did I enter upon my farm; its appearance and condition nearly ſimilar. The manſion having been occupied by a variety of temporary tenants, had been in its repair little attended to. Its furniture had been pilfered and carried away; and its roof, by inattention and neglect, plundered of its lead, might be ſeen through in many places. Its woods were deſtroyed, its viſtas annihilated, its gardens trampled down, and its ſheep-cots and out-buildings were in ruins.

But allegory apart—Let me bring reality to your eyes. I have hitherto accoſted your juſtice; I ſhall now have recourſe to your humanity. For thirty years I have been a temporary reſident in Edinburgh; the laſt ten ſeaſons a citizen, and the manager of your Theatre. During that period, I have exerted every faculty to augment your amuſements. Every ſhilling of the profits have been expended, and every ſhilling, in my power to procure, exhauſted, in order to increaſe the intereſt and credit of the theatrical concern. I laid up no hoards, ſecured no ſecret funds, depending upon the profits of ſeaſons to come. In this I ſhould not have found a diſappointment.

ment. My cares, my anxiety and toil would have finally been repaid, had I been permitted to reap the harveſts, when ripe, upon the lands I had cultured.

THE apparent ſucceſs of the ſeaſon, from the receipts of ſuch great houſes, as had occaſionally been ſeen, particularly during the race week, induced thoſe, to whom I ſtood indebted, to become preſſing for payment, as ſuppoſing a want of inclination in me only had occaſioned the delay. Previous to this period, I had become ſenſible that the receipts of the Theatre, then to come, even upon the broadeſt ſcale of calculation, from the greatneſs of my expence, could not poſſibly ſupply the demands that muſt ſoon be made upon me. I therefore negociated a loan for five hundred pounds, for which I was to give a mortgage upon part of my property. I had received one hundred, and was to have been paid the other four in two days.

BUT an impatient creditor, being a little over haſty, as is often on ſuch occaſions the caſe, though he had been made acquainted with the meaſure, and had conſented to remain

main ſatisfied, on his receiving fifty pounds of the money, took a ſtep (contrary to his compact) which effectually ſtopped the ſecurity from being completed, and thereby prevented both myſelf and him from receiving another ſhilling.

HAD I not been deprived of that ſum, in the manner ſtated, I have no heſitation in ſaying, that the diſagreeable event, which in conſequence followed, could not then have taken place; and, in all probability, never thereafter would have happened.

FOR having eſcaped the danger, had a ſucceſsful ſeaſon followed, and had I procured time to have conſulted friends, by contracting my property, and putting matters upon a proper arrangement, the ſtorm might have been weathered.

MR KING's benefit, on the Monday after the races, was free. I had therefore no relief from that. Several preſſures came on, and I was compelled to ſubmit to the ſhock. I have the ſatisfaction, however, on this occaſion, of declaring, that when the ſequeſtration took

took place, though L.993 : 15 : 3 had paſſed through my hands in the courſe of the three preceeding weeks, I ſought my perſonal ſafety with only nine ſhillings in my pocket, the only ſum in my poſſeſſion upon earth.

DURING the ſhort period of my retirement, from the 21ſt of July to the 21ſt of Auguſt, the company continued at Edinburgh and Glaſgow, under the direction of Mr King; where the lovers of Thalia were moſt amply gratified, in beholding the comic efforts of that admirable actor, carried to the higheſt pitch of excellence, by the combining and heightening exertions of the amiable, the elegant, the accompliſhed Farren.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

Mrs Eſten's firſt appearance—Her ſucceſs and attraction—Letter to Mr Harris concerning her—Other occurrences—Letter concerning Mrs Billington's engagement—Her ſtation in the vocal line.

THE winter ſeaſon of 1790 had commenced at Glaſgow, and I was diſappointed with reſpect to one of my female engagements. I went inſtantly to London, in order, if poſſible, even at that late period, to ſupply the defect. I applied to Mr Harris, with whom I have conſtantly been upon terms of friendſhip. I told him, my chief buſineſs at that time in London, was in ſearch of a lady, who could ſupply the firſt line of characters in Edinburgh; and requeſted his information and aſſiſtance therein. I added, ſhe muſt be young, handſome, and accompliſhed.

MR HARRIS mentioned two. One had been with me; the other I had never heard of. He informed me, that ſhe had been a

candidate for the ſeaſon, a pretty little woman, and her name was Eſten: That ſhe had a good figure, and poſſeſſed ſtrong theatrical requiſites; but that his company, previous to her application, had been made up.

I TOOK down the addreſs, and waited upon her accordingly that forenoon. I found her at home with her mother, in Surry. She anſwered the deſcription I had given to Mr Harris, appeared to me the very lady I was in queſt of, and I entered into an engagement with her before I left the houſe.

MRS ESTEN made her firſt appearance in Edinburgh, upon Tueſday, January 19. 1790,* in the part of *Juliet*; *Romeo*, Mr Pope; *Friar Laurence*, Mr Williamſon; *Peter*, Mr Moſs; and *Mercutio*, Mr Woods: With Mrs Barresford's *Lady Racket* in the farce.

THE

* Mrs Eſten afterwards, the ſame ſeaſon, performed *Belvidera*; *Lady Townly*; *Deſdemona*; *Lady Macbeth*; *Sigiſmunda*; *Indiana*; *Ophelia*; *Letitia Hardy*; *Roſalind*; *Widow Belmour*; *Portia*; *Beatrice*; *Lady Reſtleſs*; *Penelope*, in Gamſters; *Eſtiſania*; *Monimia*, *Collins' Ode*, and *Roxalana*; *Imogen*; *Caliſta*; *Harriet*, Guardian; *Violante*; *Dorinda*, Tempeſt; *Mrs Oakly*; *Child of Nature*; and *Lady Bell Bloomer*.

THE reception of the new *Juliet* was as flattering as her moſt ſanguine expectations could have formed. She appeared in a variety of characters afterwards, with a growing ſtrength of reputation; her expreſſion and diſcrimination of the paſſions in *Collins' Ode*, ſtampt her, in the eſtimation of the Edinburgh audience, as one of the moſt favourite daughters of Theſpis; and ſhe was adopted, by the general voice, as the theatrical child of Scotland.

SHE ſoon grew to maturity; and proved a freſh inſtance of the dramatic judgment of the audience of Edinburgh.

I WAS in treaty with Mrs Eſten for the whole of the following ſeaſon, (1791) and went to Doncaſter, finally to ſettle the terms; but, before I arrived, overtures from Mr Harris of Covent Garden had been made to her, ſo peculiarly advantageous, that it muſt have been the height of imprudence in Mrs Eſten not to have embraced the offer. And however ſtrongly her accepting of a London engagement, at that criſis, might operate againſt my intereſt, I could not diſapprove of the meaſure.

MRS ESTEN aſſured me, that ſhe entertained ſo grateful a ſenſe of the favours ſhe had received from the Edinburgh audience, that ſhe would pay them a viſit, the moment an opportunity ſerved; and pledged her word to me, at parting, that the Edinburgh Theatre, ſhould be the firſt place ſhe would perform in out of London.

SHE ſoon made good that promiſe; for having procured a ſhort leave of abſence from Mr Harris in the ſpring, ſhe engaged with me for the time; and brought with her ſuch a power of attraction, as to fetch up the latter part of rather a lagging ſeaſon, and cloſed the winter with ſucceſs.

ON Mrs Eſten's departure from Edinburgh, I tranſmitted the following letter to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre.

Shakeſpeare Square, Edinburgh, April 7. 1791.

SIR,

"AFTER repeating my acknowledgements for former favours, I beg leave to thank you for a new and laſting obligation conferred upon me, I mean your firſt introducing me

to

to the acquaintance of Mrs Eſten, and your thus kindly permitting her to come to my aſſiſtance at this juncture.

"I CANNOT think of permitting that lady to leave Edinburgh, without acquainting you, Sir, whatever may be aſſerted to the contrary, by malice or detraction, which too often purſue growing merit, that her riſe and progreſs here have been great, almoſt beyond conception.

"I CONGRATULATE you, myſelf, and the theatrical world, on ſo valuable an acquiſition to the *Britiſh Stage*. And am,

SIR,

With the greateſt ſincerity,

Your obliged and obedient ſervant,

J. JACKSON."

Thomas Harris, Eſq.
Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

IN

In the ſpring of that year, 1791, the clouds of warfare began to collect, and threatened the northern hemiſphere with a ſtorm. It went off in evaporation, with reſpect to political matters, but ſome of its groſſer particles fell upon me.

The rendezvous of the Britiſh Fleet had been appointed in Leith Roads. I had authentic information of this event, from London; and it was ſtrongly recommended to me, by ſome of the firſt characters in Edinburgh, to have a company ready, as the fleet would certainly be here, and that for ſome time. I took their advice, which alſo accorded with my own ideas, and engaged a very reſpectable and expenſive ſet of performers, which continued inactive, or drawing nothing, for many weeks. The fleet was laid up, and my ſcheme conſequently rendered abortive. Inſtead of clearing perhaps a thouſand, as I might have done, had the ſhips arrived, I loſt ſome hundreds, by their being remanded to their own harbours. The weakneſs or wiſdom of a deſign is generally eſtimated by its failure or ſucceſs.

"The vanquiſh'd rebel, as a rebel dies,
"The victor rebel plumes him on a throne."

HAD the ſcheme turned out to advantage, I ſhould have been applauded for my aſſiduity and forethought; the reverſe affixed upon me perhaps blame, as well as loſs.

THIS ſcanty harveſt, I had flattered myſelf, would be amply made up by the following ſeaſon; for which I had exerted every effort in my power; and was thereby poſſeſſed of the means, by providing a moſt excellent company. I had little doubt, alſo, from the ſtate of our correſpondence*, of procuring Mrs Billington, during ſome part of the ſeaſon, who conſequently muſt have proved a very powerful auxiliary: For, with a moſt beautiful perſon, ſhe poſſeſſes ſuch vivacity and ſcientific

No. 53. Poland Street, Feb. 28.

"DEAR SIR,

"I SHOULD have written you long before, but the uncertainty as to the time of the different muſic meetings has prevented me; and I find that it will be impoſſible for Mrs Billington to be in Edinburgh at the time I firſt thought of; therefore, muſt defer that pleaſure to a future ſeaſon.

Mrs Billington deſires her beſt reſpects. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

J. BILLINGTON."

J. Jackſon, Eſq. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

ſcientific knowledge in the muſical department, as to render her the moſt captivating dramatic ſyren of the age.

But the perſon who at that time poſſeſſed the power of controlling my fortune, though he had himſelf known the ups and downs of life, would not allow me another trial. The Theatre was advertiſed to be let for a year to the higheſt bidder; and a clauſe was inſerted in the articles of roup, that previous ſecurity ſhould be lodged by the parties propoſing to bid; a clauſe profeſſedly intended to prevent any offer from me.

In this ſituation, it was judged adviſeable for me to ſeek for ſome additional ſtrength. Two competitors ſtarted for the leaſe. Mrs Eſten, and Mr Stephen Kemble. My wiſh was to have been connected with the former; but Mrs Bennett not coming down, as ſhe had intended, and ſome miſtake happening with thoſe who conducted the buſineſs on her part, I was thereby unfortunately thrown into a treaty with Mr Kemble.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

STATEMENT OF FACTS,

RELATIVE TO

MR STEPHEN KEMBLE.

I AM now arrived at that period in which I am to ſpeak of Mr Kemble, whoſe ſingularity of conduct has been the ſole motive for my undertaking this work. In various advertiſements to the public, he has repeatedly arrogated to himſelf the very ſpecious epithets of *candour* and *juſtice*. In my only reply to thoſe aſſertions, I pledged myſelf to the world, in proper time, to prove that his conduct has been ſuch as to merit the reverſe of *both*.

I HERE enter upon the ſubject, and though in its compoſition the acid is ſo powerful an ingredient, that it muſt predominate, yet it ſhall be handled as lightly as poſſible; and the touch of a friend ſhall ſoften the edge of its aſperity.

I CONSENTED that "Mr Kemble ſhould have a *joint* and an *equal* concern with me in the Theatres of Edinburgh and Glaſgow, for a year." Miſſives were exchanged, of which the following are copies:——

Edinburgh November 2. 1791.

SIR,

"I HEREBY agree to your having a joint and equal concern with me in the Edinburgh Theatre, for a year from this date, and authorize you to take the leaſe at the ſale to-day; and oblige myſelf to procure ſatisfactory ſecurity for half of the rent; the receipts to be equally divided weekly. After the leaſe is taken, we ſhall enter into a regular agreement on ſtamped paper; and if any difficulty occurs in adjuſting the ſame, or afterwards in relation to the buſineſs, it ſhall be referred entirely to the Dean of Faculty.

"IF

"If you incline you ſhall be entitled to the ſame ſhare in time coming, I having the like option of holding alſo a joint concern.

I am, Sir,

Your humble ſervant,

J. JACKSON."

Mr Stephen Kemble.

Edinburgh, November 2, 1791.

SIR,

"I HEREBY agree to your propoſal in your letter of this day's date; and to extend a regular deed on ſtamped paper accordingly.

I am,

Your obedient ſervant,

S. KEMBLE."

Mr J. Jackſon.

IT was agreed, that if the leaſe was procured, *both* our names ſhould be inſerted. It was accordingly taken by Mr Kemble, but in his *own name* only. This ought to have given me alarm; but I was lulled into ſecurity by the ſpecioufneſs of his profeſſions to me, ignorant, as I then was, of thoſe aſſertions of ſo different a tendency, he was at the ſame time making to others.

THE very evening after the ſale was over*, Mr Kemble was heard to declare, "I have a-"greed to receive Mr Jackſon as a partner, "becauſe I thought I might be hampered "with his claim upon the patent. But though "I have admitted him apparently, I have vir-"tually excluded him: For he is to give ſecu-"rity, and I will accept of no ſecurity but "ſuch as I know it is *not in his power to give.* "It ſhall be *landed property*, or *money down*; "and that not only to the extent of the rent "and public burdens, but to any ſuppoſed "amount for contingent loſs."

ON breakfaſting at my houſe, the following morning, our future arrangements were adjuſted, and every precaution that could be ſuggeſted by either party was taken, towards the eſtabliſhment of a permanent and good underſtanding.

THE mode of ſecurity on my ſide was ſettled. The engagements that had been previouſly entered into by me, were explained; and their ſalaries and ſituations, both actors and ſervants, affixed. The painting of the ſcenery,

* Wedneſday, November 2. 1791.

ſcenery, and neceſſary repairs of the Theatre, were adjuſted. The box which I had poſſeſſed for ten years was to be reſerved for me; another of the ſame dimenſions, and in the ſame ſituation, on the oppoſite ſide of the houſe, was to be fitted up for Mr Kemble; and the management of the company, behind the curtain, was to be undertaken by him.

Before Mr Kemble's departure for Sheffield, he deſired to know to which of us letters or applications from performers, for engagements, ſhould be addreſſed. I informed him, that I was going into Wales, upon buſineſs; and that I wiſhed, for a time, till my other matters were arranged, to be relieved, as much as poſſible, from managerial cares: I therefore propoſed, that all letters ſhould be addreſſed to him. It was conſequently ſo inſerted in the next newſpapers*.

During this adjuſtment of our affairs, Mr Kemble's expreſſions were apparently ſo friendly, his claims to philanthropy ſo ſtrong, and his profeſſions of *candour* and *liberality* ſo laviſhly beſtowed, that I muſt confeſs myſelf totally

* Saturday, November 5.

totally thereby thrown off my guard. Had I not obviouſly been under the power of faſcination, I ſhould have ſaid, with *Sir Oliver Surface*,

" Too ceremonious by half."

When he boaſted of his magnificent ſcenery, that was to be brought for *our mutual uſe*, with no other expence but the carriage; when he magnified the vaſt advantages that muſt accrue from the exertions of the *friendſhip*, as well as the acting, of his brother, Mr John Kemble, who, he undertook, ſhould open the houſe; and when he dwelt upon the influence of his ſiſter's connections and attraction, could I ſuſpect that they were thus enumerated, without the leaſt intention of my being admitted to the ſmalleſt participation of advantage?

On the next day but one, Saturday November 5. at Mr Hallion's, after dinner, and previous to Mr Kemble's ſtepping into the mail coach, the *farce* was re-enacted. There the maſk of friendſhip was *thickly* worn: Cordiality, peace, and good fellowſhip, were to be the characteriſtics of our future union. Mr

Jackſon,

Jackſon and Mr Kemble were to be equal and the ſame; equal in ſalaries, equal in benefits: and in order to provide for contingencies, *eight pounds* a-week each, was to be taken out, *to make the pot boil*, as Mr Kemble termed it. His rich wardrobe was to be joined *gratis* with that of mine; and other advantages, reſulting from the partnerſhip, were enumerated.

When the purport of this diſcourſe ſhall be compared with his declaration the evening after the ſale, can the word *candour*, with propriety, be aſſumed by Mr Kemble?

Having thus parted with my ſo apparently *open-hearted* colleague, not dreaming of the moſt diſtant poſſibility of any miſunderſtanding ariſing betwixt us, what muſt have been my aſtoniſhment, on his declaration to me, and his inſtructions to Mr Biſſet, tranſmitted from Sheffield? In his letters from thence*, he declares, "I am directed by my *friends* not to accept of any ſecurity, but ſuch as Mr Gibſon ſhall think ſufficient, and

* To Andrew Biſſet, November 27.
To J. Jackſon, December 5.

and ſuch as he will himſelf immediately accept; and all this muſt be done prior to the opening of the Theatre, or all agreements betwixt you and me muſt become void. The ſecurity muſt be either the *money down*, or elſe *a mortgage of property or eſtate**." In his inſtructions to Mr Biſſet, November 27. he ſays, "I will not conſent to their† having *free benefits*; I ſhall inſiſt upon their paying the uſual expences; but I demand a *free benefit* for Mrs Kemble;" although in the contract drawn up by Mr Biſſet, was inſerted by his own order, November 5. "It being hereby underſtood and agreed on by the parties, that they ſhall be reſpectively entitled to the ſum of L. 8 Sterling *per* week, of ſalary, for themſelves, Mrs Kemble, and Mrs Jackſon, and a free benefit to each of the ſaid four named perſons."

It is left to Mr Kemble to reconcile theſe two contradictory orders, and to point out the liberality of his *laſt inſtruction*.

That

* The *very words* he had uſed the evening after the roup, as before quoted, page 204.

† Mr and Mrs Jackſon.

THAT Mr Kemble clearly and pointedly agreed to accept of the ſecurity I offered, the only one, in my then ſituation, I *could offer*, is proved by the ſcroll of the contract, drawn out at his own deſire, and by his own man of buſineſs. He there pointedly inſerts as my ſecurity, the name of the gentleman, who he had previouſly concerted, ſhould be joined with me; and who I invariably offered to the arbiter. This ſcroll may be ſeen in the hands of the clerk to the arbitration, or a copy of it with me.

IT was at Bala, in North Wales, I was informed by a letter from my agent, that a ſcroll had been preſented to him, quite contrary to the original miſſive*, which he had on that account rejected; and that he had drawn out another, conſonant to his ideas, which he had delivered to Mr Biſſet, to be tranſmitted to Mr Kemble.

WHEN the reader recurs to the actual terms of the miſſive, and compares them

 with

* Scroll by Mr Biſſet, Mr Kemble's agent.

with the conditions of the new ſcroll, which were, that Mr Kemble ſhould have "the ſole and *uncontrolled* management and direction of the Theatre, to engage and pay the performers, and to undertake every other duty incumbent upon a manager, without the interference or aſſiſtance of the ſaid John Jackſon," he will ſurely acknowledge, that a party in an agreement, whoſe miſſive poſitively expreſſes a *joint* and *equal concern*, was juſtified in rejecting terms equally diſgraceful and oppreſſive.

WRITE volumes, or ſpeak hours, upon the ſubject, the moſt far-ſtrained arguments can never conſtitute *uncontrolled management*, and *equal concern*, ſynonimous expreſſions.

IN this ſtate of the buſineſs the Theatre opened, under the uncontrolled management of the man whoſe agreement with me was to take a joint and an equal concern. That I felt the unfair advantage taken of my ſituation, that I knew every means was uſed to prejudice the public againſt me, and to eſtabliſh Mr Kemble, I will not deny; but I alſo knew my agreement with him would terminate

nate with the year; and having neither *money* nor *landed property*, as he too truly ſaid, I made up my mind to receive the ſum agreed upon, in Mr Kemble's *conſiderate mood*, to make the pot boil. But no ſuch grace was intended for me. Myſelf, my wife, and three children, who, though not bred in luxury, had at leaſt been uſed to eat, were to ſeek our ſubſiſtence elſewhere; for Mr Kemble poſitively refuſed, unleſs I could compaſs impoſſibilities, namely, to bring him money or land, to divide with me a ſingle ſhilling. How in this ſituation the dreary winter muſt have paſſed over the heads of an inſolvent family, the feeling mind, and I truſt I am appealing to many ſuch, may gueſs; it is paſt my power to deſcribe.

By Mr Kemble's thus arrogating to himſelf powers which the miſſive never ſo much as hinted at; and by his exerting *thoſe powers*, even to a *wantonneſs* of *oppreſſion*, I was reduced to the neceſſity of having recourſe to the Dean of Faculty's interference; and notwithſtanding my being thoroughly convinced of having given in the ſecurity

agreed upon, and that, *bona fide*, in every ſenſe ſufficient; yet, without allowing it to call in queſtion the validity of the former caution, in order to remove all cavils upon that head, I ſent in the name of a ſecond ſurety, equally reſponſible, and that before our firſt interview with the Honourable Arbiter took place.

But this, and every other endeavour, on my ſide, to accommodate matters upon fair and honourable principles, were ineffectual. No accommodation for me, unleſs I conſented to ſell the birth-right of me and my family for "a meſs of pottage," or to become "a hewer of wood, or a drawer of water," beneath the laſh of Mr Stephen Kemble.

So certain was he of my never being able to outlive the ſtorm, that, like the inhabitant of a barbarous coaſt, he ſmiled in ſafety upon the ſhore, and enjoyed the wiſhed for and expected wreck, in hopes of ſharing the ſpoil.

To this inſidious conduct, Mr Kemble was pleaſed to add a ſeries of ill-mannered inſults, which

which could ſerve for no other purpoſe but to ſtamp the tyrany of *his own* character; for I was fallen, and in his triumph he forgot both mercy and juſtice; as a proof of which, I beg to trouble the reader with *two* inſtances, in addition to others that will hereafter appear. In a converſation which paſſed in the green-room, wherein my ſituation was diſcuſſed, Mr Kemble was ſo good as to declare, "Let Mr Jackſon only expreſs to me in writing, that he has no concern with me and the Theatre, and I ſhall conſider what I ſhall do *for him and his family.*" If I would give up my hopes of ever having it in my power to provide for my family; if I would reſign a property that might enable me to fulfil my compact with my creditors; if I would become in the inſtant, a beggar, Mr Kemble would conſider what *he* would do for my family. Is there a human being who has a ſpark of reſpect for himſelf, who would not with me, in ſuch a ſituation, turn from the ſelf-important Mr Kemble with contempt?

Had my children been reduced to the ſituation he apparently wiſhed, and to which he did all in his power to reduce them, what

what he would, in that caſe, have done *for them*, may be gueſſed at, from a ſhort dialogue, which I ſhall beg leave to introduce, between him and his ſervants, reſpecting *me*, as the other inſtance of his liberality.

ONE of the few nights that I troubled the Theatre laſt ſeaſon, I deſired the box-keeper to inſert my name at the door. When the return was delivered to him, after the play, he demanded to know who I was. I ſee one Jackſon here;—who is he?

Door-Keeper. Why, Mr Jackſon.

Mr Kemble. What Mr Jackſon?

Door-Keeper. Mr Jackſon of the Theatre Royal.

Mr Kemble. Damn it, by G—d, that is too bad to come into my houſe.

THIS liberality to the father, would no doubt have been *trebled* upon the ſon, had he unfortunately ſtood in need of Mr Kemble's aſſiſtance.

THESE

THESE occurrences, mere introductory traits of Mr Kemble's conduct and carriage towards me, are trifling, when placed in compariſon with the various ſteps he thought proper to take in the buſineſs, as will immediately be explained, in the annexed letters to the Right Honourable the Lord Advocate and the Dean of Faculty.

In which I have ſtudiouſly endeavoured, from the bottom of my ſoul, to

"Nothing extenuate, nor ſet down aught in malice."

AND, let Mr Kemble's endeavours to explain be what they will, facts are ſtubborn things, which cannot be contraverted; and the reader may reſt aſſured, there is not an aſſertion already made, or that will hereafter appear in this publication, relating to Mr Kemble, that ſhall not be ſtubſtantiated, in proper time, by the moſt reſpectable and uncontravertible evidence.

SECT. XII.

LETTERS to the Hon. HENRY ERSKINE, *Dean of Faculty.*

Edinburgh, April 18. 1792.

SIR,

As I have, in compliance with your requiſition, lodged in the hands of your clerk, ſuch letters as relate to the engagement in queſtion; and as Mr Playfair has likewiſe officially delivered in a minute upon the buſineſs, the laſt which I hope will be neceſſary, it may poſſibly be deemed a work of ſupererogation for me to enter further into the ſubject. But where aſſertions, made by one party, under the averment of a reſpectable witneſs, are not to be received in evidence, becauſe denied by the other, without farther corroborating proofs, nothing but a chain of correſponding circumſtances, from firſt to laſt, can illucidate thoſe facts, which a point blank denial has rendered doubtful; and as I have not hitherto in one inſtance acted contrary to

the true and juſt meaning of the miſſive, I think it a duty, highly incumbent upon me, to beg leave, Sir, to lay before you a plain ſtatement of the progreſs of the buſineſs, which, diveſted of proteſts, ſcrolls of contracts, memorials, and replies, may be compriſed within the ſcope of your leiſure, and by that means, amidſt a preſſure of more momentous concerns, ſtand a fairer chance of gaining at leaſt a tranſient peruſal. The ſanction which on many occaſions, and at various periods, for more than twenty years, you have been pleaſed to honour me with, will, I flatter myſelf, enſure me this favour.

After ſome converſation with Mr Kemble on the ſubject, it was agreed that he ſhould be admitted to a *joint and equal concern* with me in the leaſe of the Theatre, for a year, provided it could be procured; and immediately before the ſale, it was finally reſolved upon, that Mr Kemble ſhould be the bidder, and that if it was knocked down to him, he ſhould then declare that the purchaſe of the leaſe was for himſelf and me conjunctly. This adjuſtment of the matter, in that ſtage of the buſineſs, was in company

pany with Mr Playfair, at my houſe. The leaſe for a year was obtained, but Mr Kemble gave in his own name only as the purchaſer. It did not occur to me at that moment that I ſhould be liable to experience ſuch diſagreeable circumſtances from the omiſſion of my name in the leaſe, nor would I inſinuate that it was done with any deſign by Mr Kemble, as his intention to throw me out of the advantages of the ſeaſon altogether did not ſeem to have been a part of his plan, till ſome time after his arrival at Sheffield*.

As I had much buſineſs to adjuſt, reſpecting my own private concerns, I conſented that the office of acting manager for the ſeaſon, ſhould devolve upon Mr Kemble. It was then reſolved that the Newcaſtle Theatre ſhould cloſe the firſt week in January, and that this ſhould open upon Saturday the 7th of the ſame month, with Mr John Kemble in *Hamlet*, who was to perform ſix nights, on the ſame terms as Mrs Siddons, who was likewiſe

* I was not then acquainted with Mr Kemble's declaration, made the evening after the ſale, reſpecting the ſecurity, ſee page 204.

by agreement to be here in the courſe of the ſeaſon, provided her health would permit.

On Mr Kemble's being queſtioned how he would ſatisfy the Newcaſtle people, he replied, He had done it already. I told him I had attempted it*, but found it impoſſible, as they choſe to have their Theatre open at the ſame time with ours. He ſaid he had been fortunate enough to accompliſh it, having obtained their conſent to the meaſure. I did not at that time diſcredit the aſſertion. To all this Mr Playfair was an ear-witneſs.

I had then, Sir, a good company, and before the commencement of the ſeaſon, ſhould have had a moſt excellent one.—Our greateſt difficulty, therefore, was to determine, who ſhould *not* be engaged.

Room

* Eight or nine years ago, which was previous to the building of the preſent Theatre Royal of Newcaſtle, I was in treaty with ſome of the gentlemen of that place to form a junction with Edinburgh and Glaſgow; but after a thorough inveſtigation, I found the meaſure impracticable, as the Newcaſtle ſeaſon is during the ſpring months, exactly at the ſame time with that of Edinburgh; and having been lately there, I can aſſert that they have not yet changed their ſentiments on that ſubject.

Room could not be found for Mrs Barresford and Mr Williamſon. In Mr Kemble's letter to that Gentleman, which I have in my poſſeſſion, he gives as a reaſon for not retaining them, "That he finds, upon comparing notes with Mr Jackſon, that ſo many performers are already engaged, that he has it not in his power to offer ſituations deſirable to them," For the ſame reaſon neither Mr Hallion nor Meſſrs Charteris and Sparks could be engaged.

WITHOUT the ſmalleſt hint to me of any intended deviation from the forementioned plan, it ſoon appeared, from Mr Kemble's letters to others, that a ſecond company was to be formed, as it was not, I preſume, upon trial, found ſo eaſy a matter to perſuade the town of Newcaſtle to permit the time of their amuſements to be curtailed, in order to ſuit the convenience of an individual. Thoſe actors, therefore, who had been diſcharged, or who could not be accommodated with ſituations before, were inſtantly applied to, and moſt of them engaged. The ſcarcity of performers on this emergency muſt be attributed to me—To *me*, at that period in the remoteſt part of North Wales,

Wales, ignorant of what was paſſing in the North of England, or in Edinburgh, and happy in the idea that the theatrical arrangements of the ſeaſon had been ſo well adjuſted. Had Mr Kemble informed me even then of his intention, I might in ſome meaſure perhaps have been able to have obviated the difficulty. I paſſed in ſight of Shrewſbury, where Mr Scriven and Mrs Atchmet then were; and it might poſſibly have been in my power to have perſuaded them to have adhered to their former intentions of viſiting Edinburgh. Nay, I could have gone eaſily to Bath, have ſettled with Mr Wallis, and viſited any other neighbouring company, or perhaps the metropolis. Such was my intention, had the ſole direction continued with me.

Mr Playfair's letter to me at Bala, gave me the firſt intimation of any demur to the buſineſs. He therein appriſed me of the receipt of a ſcroll, produced by Mr Biſſet on the part of Mr Kemble, containing clauſes diametrically oppoſite to the true intent of the miſſive, which he knew I ſhould object to: That he had drawn out another, according to his own ideas, which he ſhould tranſmit

mit to Mr Kemble at Newcaſtle. Both theſe ſcrolls, Sir, are in your poſſeſſion, and muſt ſpeak for themſelves.

In the courſe of this narrative there are ſome points, Sir, on which I muſt beg leave to comment. With reſpect to Mrs Atchmet, that ſhe would have been here, had the management remained ſolely with me, I ſtill believe and contend for. Her reaſon for changing her intention, I have not *yet* had an opportunity of learning. Certain I am, that ſalary was not the bar; if it had, I would have given her more: though Mr Kemble thought even the L. 4 a week, which I had offered her, too much. I ſuſpect the ſame cauſe might have operated with Mrs Atchmet as with Miſs Wallis. In a letter from her father, which I have juſt now ſeen, dated Bath, January 26. 1792, though he diſclaims any poſitive engagement, he ſays, "I ſhould have been very glad to take her, (Miſs Wallis,) to Edinburgh, *this winter*, had Jackſon continued manager." And again, "tell your manager, I ſincerely wiſh him ſucceſs; though I confeſs I ſhould have been juſt as well pleaſed to hear that the Edinburgh Theatre had fallen into any other hands,

hands, as I was in hopes Jane might have picked up ſome pence there*."

I CANNOT help here obſerving, Sir, that I can take no ſhare of culpability or negligence to myſelf as manager, for not having endeavoured, before that time, to have entered into a formal article with thoſe ladies. The Theatre had been advertiſed to be let for ſome weeks; and common prudence compelled me to be as cautious as poſſible what engagements I made, as, had the Theatre not remained with me, I might have been brought into a very diſagreeable predicament. This I explained to Mr Kemble, and he knew the exact ſituation in which I ſtood.

BUT poſitive and legal engagements, it appears, on this occaſion, would have been of no avail. Meſſrs Scriven and Willoughby were under poſitive and legal engagements, yet they could not be induced to fulfil thoſe engagements. The ſame uniform cauſe

* An aſſertion had been made by Mr Kemble, in preſence of the arbiter, which rendered it neceſſary for me to inſert the above particulars. If the reader will take the trouble of turning to Section XV. he will there be made acquainted with the circumſtance.

cauſe, I preſume, operated with them all. Theſe gentlemen were a real loſs to the Theatre; the former, by report, is an excellent actor; the latter I have ſeen, and he is infinitely better than any one Mr Kemble brought with him; I muſt except Mr Lee-Lewes; he came by chance, and cannot conſequently be ranked in Mr Kemble's engagements.

In regard to the ſecurity, I can only ſay, that it was agreed upon, and was ſo underſtood by Mr Biſſet, who had his inſtructions from Mr Kemble, and drew out the ſcroll accordingly*. The objection to *one* ſecurity, through form only, cannot ſurely hold good, as what is objectionable on one ſide, I muſt preſume, Sir, ſhould be ſo on the other. In this very tranſaction, there is an inſtance in point. Mr Siddons' *ſole* ſecurity is admitted for double the ſum. Your reply to this, Sir, I know. You will ſay, why not remove difficulties when in your power? Why did you not long ago give in additional ſecurity? To

* Had Mr Kemble, in one of his *candid* and *conſiderate* intervals, made the ſame declaration to me, that he did to others, that he would accept of no ſecurity but *landed property* or *money down*, I ſhould have declined the connection, and all had been well.

this I have a ready, and, I ſhould ſuppoſe, a ſatisfactory anſwer: I had but *one* perſon I choſe to apply to on that occaſion, and I reſerved him for a more conſequential purpoſe. I did not wiſh to overload his friendſhip.

But, Sir, the validity of the ſecurity was only a pretended, not the real blot in the contract. Mr Kemble had taken up the idea of making me a cypher. I was to be half the ſecurity, and that in *money down*, or a mortgage on landed property, yet I was to have nothing to ſay; I was not even in the ſmalleſt inſtance to have a power of control; I was to put myſelf in Mr Kemble's mercy, while I was ſleeping, or unconſcious of the danger, to run me hundreds of pounds in debt; to ſuffer him to lay plans, and connive at tranſactions, in which he might clear L. 1000 by the ſeaſon, and leave me, on the winding up our accompts, a loſer at the end.

This theory has already been verified by reality. He orders, without my conſent or knowledge, a parcel of old ſcenes from Newcaſtle, and profeſſes to charge for them L. 400. I would not, Sir, had I been conſulted, have

conſented

conſented to allow for them L. 20. I knew that pageantry, carried from town to town in the North of England, could never attract the attention of an Edinburgh audience, after they had ſeen the *Baſtile* and *Captain Cook* in the Theatre Royal, and *Oſcar and Malvina* in the Circus. My opinion has been proved to be well founded. There was more money taken at the Theatre, from the uſe of an eighteen-penny book, the *Road to Ruin*, than by all the Newcaſtle ſcenery, ſo pompouſly uſhered into notice.

Mr Kemble's arrogating to himſelf powers that neither the miſſive, nor any permiſſion of mine ever gave him, is the ſole obſtacle to our compromiſe.

After the bargain was concluded, by *my conſent only*, for ſo he advertiſed, he was to be acting manager for the ſeaſon. There is not a performer in the three kingdoms, that cannot in a moment define the office of acting manager. It is to regulate the company behind the curtain, and to carry into execution what had previouſly and privately been ſettled by the partners. This, Sir, I conſented to,

in the perſon of Mr Kemble, and from this I never expreſſed a wiſh to depart. But this I looked upon as a matter of courteſy, and not of right; for it was no part of the miſſive, and to nothing farther could I give my conſent. Our agreement was a *joint* and *equal partnerſhip*; ſuch was it ever conceived by me. According to Mr Kemble's ideas, it was a partnerſhip to be executed only by *one*. I might ſay, Sir, with a Right Honourable Friend of yours, it is an union founded upon reciprocity; but where the whole power is uſurped by one, and ſubmiſſion only pointed out to the other, the reciprocity muſt certainly be all upon *one* ſide.

An unequal junction of this kind, Sir, could never enter into my thought. No earthly conſideration ſhould ever have induced me to accept of a *ſinecure*, or become an *annuitant*, in an undertaking where I had riſked my all, and cringe beneath the man whoſe avowed intention was to found his fortune upon my expected and premeditated ruin.

After the declarations that Mr Kemble has recently made, Sir, that he would take care

care I ſhould be a loſer at the end of the ſeaſon, or, at any rate, that I ſhould be no gainer; for that he would ſhut the houſe the moment the rent was paid, and not permit his ſiſter to come down, or any other engagement to take place, in which I was to partake of the advantage. After ſuch a declaration, I ſay, Sir, and in ſuch circumſtances, ſo widely different from the true intent of the miſſive, I cannot think of ſuffering any friend of mine to become ſecurity for me in ſo deſperate a game*.

I HAD three powerful reaſons, Sir, that inclined me to put up with many diſagreeables, rather than decline a participation of the profits of the ſeaſon. My own ſubſiſtence; for I could not work, to beg I was aſhamed. The education and ſupport of a young family, and the intereſt of my creditors. For though they had conſented to receive ten ſhillings only, yet, Sir, a compoſition never had my

* From a converſation with the arbiter, at this period, Mr Kemble had taken up an idea that the agreement would have been enforced according to the original miſſive, he therefore thought proper to make the above declarations, at an interview with me, but not in preſence of the arbiter.

my cordial aſſent. It was a temporary expedient, the act of neceſſity, a ſtep in advance towards a ſituation that may poſſibly enable me to make farther payments. The deprivation, therefore, of my ſtipulated emoluments, is a diminution of the funds appropriated for that purpoſe; and the loſs of a ſeaſon, is the loſs of the earnings of one year of my life, towards the extinguiſhment of honorary demands.

I SPEAK now, Sir, to your feelings. Had you been Mr Kemble, you would not have acted as Mr Kemble has done. You would not have ſaid to yourſelf, I like the undertaking in which I am embarked; I ſee its advantages; my partner's embarraſſments furniſh me with a pretext; I will lay hold of the opening, and poſſeſs myſelf of the whole. You would not have taken every mode of adding to my difficulties; you would not have rendered me liable to the preſſure of ſmall demands, by unjuſtly withholding from me the means of diſcharging them.

YOU would not have diſmiſſed a ſervant that had been with me twelve years, becauſe he

he had carried a meſſage for me; making uſe of the old adage, "You cannot ſerve two maſters."

You would not have deprived Mr Bland of ſixteen ſhillings of his weekly ſtipend*, contrary to an expreſs agreement, becauſe he was one of Mr Jackſon's vermine; an appellation which Mr Kemble had thought proper to affix to the members of my former company: but Mr Jackſon's vermine, have, amidſt *his* noble animals, proved themſelves Lords of the Foreſt.

You rather would have ſaid, I ſee Mr Jackſon is yet under ſome temporary embarraſſments; I will not add to them; I will not ſtart unneceſſary obſtacles; I hold the ſecurity which in my own conſcience I know I agreed to take; I will commence the ſeaſon, and we will mutually receive the ſettled ſtipend.

Had an immediate loſs taken place, you would then, Sir, have juſtly called upon my ſecurity

* Theſe are a few of Mr Kemble's *liberal* actions, during the courſe of the ſeaſon. Mr Bland has had recourſe to a Court of Juſtice, and has conſequently recovered his arrears.

ſecurity for ſuch pecuniary aid as would have made up the deficiency. If complied with, complaint would have been unneceſſary; if not, you would have found an eaſy, and an early mode of redreſs. And in either caſe, your conduct would have been conſiſtent with your juſtice and humanity.

You would then have had the pleaſure of acting up to the dictates you had profeſſed, and I ſhould have been relieved from a long liſt of mortifying and painful ſituations, the continuance of which, for another ſeaſon, would have put a period to my exiſtence.

To avoid that, for the ſake of my family and myſelf, I muſt decline any farther intercourſe with Mr Kemble, that I may have a chance of ſurviving a few winters longer, to have the honour of proving to you, how much I am,

SIR,

Your obedient ſervant,

J. JACKSON.

The Honourable Henry Erſkine,
Dean of Faculty.

SECOND
LETTER to the Hon. HENRY ERSKINE, *Dean of Faculty.*

Edinburgh, July 30. 1792.

SIR,

FROM your converſation yeſterday, I cannot help being of opinion, that you either have never read the letter I had the honour of tranſmitting to you on the 18th of April, or that ſome paſſages in it have eſcaped your memory. I muſt therefore requeſt of you, before you give a deciſion, which muſt at leaſt be attended with unpleaſing circumſtances, that you will favour me with its reperuſal. I muſt beg leave of you likewiſe, Sir, as you wiſh for farther information, to lay the following circumſtances before you, ſome of which have only come to my knowledge ſince I addreſſed you laſt.

As early as the day of the contract, Mr Kemble pointedly declared, that I never ſhould have any thing to do with the Theatre this ſeaſon: That indeed there was an agreement, that on Mr Jackſon's finding ſecurity, he was to be half concerned; but that he would take care that no ſuch ſecurity ſhould be received; for, continues he, "It muſt be ſuch ſecurity as I am pleaſed with; and I ſhall certainly point out ſuch ſecurity only, as I know he cannot procure. It ſhall be money down, or a mortgage on a landed eſtate*."

The day the houſe opened, a perſon, in my behoof, deſired that Mr Gibb, the box-office keeper, would furniſh him with a return of the night's receipt, a duplicate of which I had requeſted him to procure. Gibb's anſwer was, that Mr Kemble had given him poſitive orders to the contrary. On this refuſal, Mr Kemble himſelf was aſked the following morning, how much there was in the houſe? He declared he would not tell; for, ſays he, if I do, you will inform Mr Jackſon: And his declarations through the ſeaſon uniformly

* This extraordinary aſſertion is more minutely ſtated, page 204.

formly were, that I had nothing at all to do with the Theatre.

It had been expreſsly ſtipulated, that a box ſhould be partitioned off, on the oppoſite ſide to the one I have ſo long uſed, for Mr Kemble. Orders were in conſequence given to fit it up. As ſome other matters had employed the carpenters, it was not ready at the commencement of the ſeaſon, as had been intended; Mrs Jackſon therefore deſired Mr Kemble to be informed, that, as the box propoſed for his uſe was not yet prepared, ſhe requeſted him, till it was, to accept of hers. To this he replied, "Tell Mrs Jackſon, that I ſhall accept of her box, when ſhe has one to offer; and I wonder ſhe has not more delicacy than to think of coming into the houſe at all, where ſhe has no right*." Mrs Jack-

* No cauſe can be aſſigned for Mr Kemble's ſudden change of conduct towards Mr and Mrs Jackſon, particularly the latter, but a premeditated deſign to break off all connections with them. They had parted on the moſt cordial and apparent friendly terms. Mr Kemble went to Newcaſtle, and Mr Jackſon into Wales; and no occurrence had happened, or tranſaction taken place, that could poſſibly, in Mr Jackſon's abſence, have extorted from Mr Kemble ſo unmanly and unmerited a reply to Mrs Jackſon's polite meſſage.

ſon, it would be needleſs to add, has taken up no room in the Theatre ſince.

ON the carpenter's preparing to fit up the oppoſite box, as he had been directed, Mr Kemble ordered him to deſiſt, ſaying, "One box is enough for one manager; I will not have it done."

THIS, Sir, was no arrangement of rehearſals; no acting managerial adjuſtment in the department I had conſented for the ſeaſon he ſhould fill. It was a part of the agreement, expreſsly and mutually entered into, and as pointedly and almoſt inſtantly broken by Mr Kemble.

AND though, Sir, the being thruſt out of a box, in the face of the ſervants, we had poſſeſſed more than ten years, may be deemed by you as a matter of no great conſequence, yet, Sir, the going to the Theatre, me and my family, for a ſeaſon, and the taking a friend with us, I muſt inſiſt upon, was a money tranſaction; and the depriving me of that advantage, which muſt be eſtimated at ſome value,

value, was a violation of that part of the agreement, and conſequently an infringement of the bargain altogether.

You were pleaſed, Sir, very early to ſignify, that my having informed Mr Kemble, by letter to him at Sheffield, that Mrs Atchmet was engaged, (which turned out to be a miſtake of Mr Kemble's,) would have been a breach of the agreement on my ſide. How wide then muſt the fracture have been made by ſo many repeated inſtances on the other!

But, Sir, I aſſured you yeſterday, and I repeat the aſſertion, I do not believe there is an actor, ſcene-ſhifter, ſervant, or runner, about the Theatre, that has not heard Mr Kemble ſay, that Mr Jackſon had nothing to do with the houſe this year.

If all theſe aſſertions, Sir, none of them imaginary, or from hearſay, are to be ſet aſide by the bare negative of one, in oppoſition to the ſolemn declarations of others, that are ready to be ſubſtantiated by proof; or, if it is your opinion, contrary to that of every confidential friend I have ſpoken with on the ſubject, that

an

an engagement broken, and that repeatedly, by one party, ſhall nevertheleſs remain binding upon the other, you will then, of courſe, determine, that the miſſive is ſtill in force. In that caſe, it muſt be allowed, that if I have any thing to do with the leaſe of the Theatre for the next ſeaſon, Mr Kemble, as before intended, is to be admitted to an equal ſhare. For upon terms of equality only did I enter into a treaty with him, and never before or ſince have I, on any other conditions, expreſſed my conſent to a connection with Mr Kemble.

"A JOINT and equal concern," are the words; can there be a doubt in the expreſſion? For my own part, I can wreſt it to no other meaning. As well might I make equality ſervility, or ſubſtance ſhadow.

BUT to leave argument upon a point where no reaſoning can hold good, I muſt again declare to you, that the very unfeeling conduct (to uſe no harſher expreſſion) towards myſelf and Mrs Jackſon, in the ſituation we then were, has confirmed the opinion I originally entertained of him; and I will ſooner forego

an intereſt in the leaſe of the Theatre for the next ſeaſon altogether, than have any intercourſe with that gentleman.

THESE, Sir, are my ſentiments, and this my determination, for the rectitude of which I ſhall appeal to *God and the Public*. And however I may differ from you in opinion upon this ſubject, I am, with the greateſt reſpect,

SIR,

Your obedient ſervant,

J. JACKSON.

The Honourable Henry Erſkine,
Dean of Faculty.

SECT. XIII.

LETTER to the Right Honourable the Lord Advocate of Scotland.

Edinburgh, September 14. 1792.

My Lord,

I never entertained the moſt diſtant idea, of having occaſion to recur to the tranſactions on the renewal of the patent, or to remind your Lordſhip of the purport of thoſe converſations I was honoured with, by you, on that occaſion. But from the ſuppoſed effects of the Dean of Faculty's decreet-arbitral, reſpecting the preſent theatrical arrangements, I find myſelf, however unwillingly, under the neceſſity of renewing the ſubject.

For no crime alledged againſt me, that I ever heard of, the renewal of the patent, in the common form, was objected to; my right to it was proved, and allowed on all hands

the length of time was at laſt the only objection. It was offered me by Sir Adam Ferguſon, in my own name, for ten years. This I pointedly refuſed. Mr Walter Roſs, who had an intereſt in the ſettlement, propoſed, that it ſhould be taken out in the names of the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas. He made it appear to me, in the cleareſt colours, that my right would ſuffer no infringement thereby, and that the only difference would be in the name. The Engliſh Council were of the ſame opinion. I therefore, perſonally, requeſted of the Duke and Mr Dundas to hold it. The rights of the proprietors of the Theatre were reſerved, and it was perfectly underſtood that it was held for my uſe. The fees of office were paid by me, and I poſſeſſed the patent as fully ever ſince, as if my name had been inſerted, and ſhould, I am confident, have continued ſo to do without queſtion, had not a derangement in my pecuniary matters taken place*.

It will be neceſſary, my Lord, here to obſerve, that this deficiency of ſupplies aroſe chiefly from the mode of taking out the patent; a conſequence, which though it was not, might

* This ſubject has been fully diſcuſſed, Sect. VIII. p. 138.

might naturally have been foreſeen. I had, Sir, in order to complete the theatrical plan, which I judged would be worth improvement, built a Theatre in Glaſgow; laid out large ſums upon the Edinburgh one; was erecting a third at Aberdeen, then thought neceſſary; and, in the interim, had never ſpared expences in procuring the firſt performers, frequently to the extent of, and ſometimes even beyond the receipts*.

This obliged me to look out for an additional ſum of money to anſwer immediate demands; it would eaſily have been procured to a larger amount than I had occaſion for; but the ſecurity was the bar. The aſſignment of the patent was wanting. Other modes of relief were attempted, but before they could be carried into effect, a haſty creditor took (even for himſelf) an ill adviſed ſtep: others of courſe preſſed forward, and a ſequeſtration was the unavoidable conſequence.

Two years have ſince elapſed, during

* Theſe matters have been enlarged upon and explained, Sect. X. p. 177.

which period I have ſtruggled through many painful and unpleaſing trials. After, however, repeated, and the moſt accurate inveſtigations, it has appeared, that the derangement of my money concerns aroſe from the greatneſs of the expence in which I was neceſſarily involved, in the execution of my theatrical plan.

CONVINCED of this truth, my creditors have accepted of a compoſition, which at the inſtance of my friends I was induced to offer, with the ſole view of being enabled to regain a ſituation, which might put it in my power, at ſome future period, to convince them of my real motives for embracing the meaſure.

BEFORE the compoſition could be brought forward, the Theatre was taken for a year, by Mr S. Kemble, with whom, I need hardly inform you, I was by contract to have had a joint and equal concern; but affecting to believe me totally out of the queſtion, he threw me off, even before the ſeaſon commenced, and the agreement in conſequence has never been implemented.

Two

Two letters from me to the Dean of Faculty, will accompany this. They will let you into ſome lights, my Lord, reſpecting Mr Kemble's conduct, and my ſituation during laſt ſeaſon.

Finding it advantageous to continue the leaſe for a further term, and being at length convinced that it will be neceſſary in that caſe to take me along with him, Mr Kemble now offers to implement an agreement, which, for a ſeaſon paſt, (like the bell-man of a country town) in the front of the Regiſter-office, he has been bellowing to every paſſenger, that I had not the ſmalleſt concern in; nay, he profeſſes himſelf willing to allow me the ſtipulated emoluments of the ſeaſon, from which he had moſt wickedly and wantonly cut me off. But the time is paſt, my Lord, and it is not in the power of fate to recall it, neither is it in the power of man to wipe away the injuries I have ſuſtained from Mr Kemble.

When he beheld me in the gulph of affliction, he walked aloof; but when I unexpectedly reached the ſhore, he wiſhed to hold out his hand, not with an intention to ſave,

but

but in the expectation of gaining another unguarded moment of ſhoving me in.

In a more early period, at an accidental interview with Mr William Gibſon, in the preſence of the Dean of Faculty, when an union with the ſame party was propoſed, I told him, that he might reduce me to the uttermoſt, and compell me to dig in a quarry for ſixpence a-day, which I would ſuffer with pleaſure, rather than be compelled to a junction with Mr Kemble.

This declaration, though a harſh one, proceeded from the idea I had formed of his diſpoſition, when he was a performer in my company; but on reaſoning and conſidering coolly on the ſubject, I was induced to believe, that turbulence of temper I had at times obſerved, was the reſult of a tenaciouſneſs of characters, and the arrangements of ſtage buſineſs, in which a manager and an actor frequently diſagree, being actuated, the one by an anxious concern for the whole, the other by his own individual advantage.

In an independent and equal ſituation, I judged this tenacity might be laid aſide, and as I was reſolved in all points of buſineſs to give and take, I did not doubt but the ſeaſon might paſs away in that tranquillity, for which I moſt anxiouſly wiſhed, and which at all events I was determined to promote. The reſult, however, Sir, has proved how ill founded my laſt opinion was, and how juſtly the former one had poſſeſſed my mind.

Thus my original reſolution has been the more confirmed by experience; and I moſt ſolemnly declare, I would ſuffer any hardſhips, or ſubmit to any ſituation, however humiliating, ſooner than enter into any kind of connection for the future, with a man of ſuch an unfeeling and ſavage diſpoſition.

The queſtion will then be, Sir, whether the leſſee, who has only rented the houſe for a ſeaſon, and who, not poſſeſſed of a ſhilling of the property, muſt reſign it in little more than a month, ſhall be permitted to thruſt out the proprietor, who purchaſed the Theatre for a valuable conſideration, and poſſeſſing it for ten years, all that time laboured with

with unremitting pains to acquire the good opinion of the public, and whoſe greateſt fault has avowedly been the adventuring too largely in their ſervice. I ſhould not heſitate my Lord, one moment, in referring this point to the deciſion of your juſtice.

WHEN formerly a ſet of gentlemen, with whom you then thought proper to act, expreſſed a deſire to become conductors of the Theatre, ſpeaking with your Lordſhip on the ſubject, I aſked you, whether you would be inſtrumental in ſtripping me of my all, and turning me out, with a young family, into the world to ſeek our bread? Your reply was, that "you would ſooner ſuffer your hand to be cut off." And now, my Lord, on a ſimilar occaſion, when an effort is made to deprive me of one half of my expectations, you will not, I am confident, unleſs under the influence of deception, liſten one moment to a propoſal ſo confeſſedly unjuſt.

To remove that impulſe of deception, my Lord, which the wiles of an intereſted individual will attempt to infuſe, I take the liberty of troubling you with this. The jet of

his

his argument, on this head, I am appriſed of, and ſhall find no difficulty to repel. For this purpoſe, though compariſons are diſagreeable, at leaſt to a party concerned, I muſt be under the neceſſity of making a reference to former ſeaſons, comparative with the laſt.

FIRST, then, for my management.—Turn back your recollection with me, my Lord, to the period at which it commenced. I found the houſe, as it is well known, a mere wreck. There was not a ſcene that was fit for uſe. Even the roof was in ruins, and was neceſſarily renewed. As you ſit in your box, my Lord, there is ſcarcely an article in view that was not of my placing.

CAST your eye, my Lord, upon the *Dramatis Perſonæ* of the performances of London. Is there, or has there been, a performer of eminence there, for the paſt ten years, that could be procured at any price, you have not ſeen? And ſome of them repeatedly. They have been ſupported by companies of performers likewiſe as reſpectable, or perhaps more ſo, than the nature of the ſcheme would permit.

To this fact, Sir, I call the whole town as my evidence. Various atteſtations might be produced upon this point, from actors of the firſt magnitude, expreſſing their approbation of the conduct of the manager, and the attention of the company to them, and to the ſtage buſineſs. One inſtance ſhall ſuffice.

Saturday, June 12. 1784.

SIR,

"MY exceſſive hurry and fatigue, will, I hope, be an excuſe to you and Mrs Jackſon, for not paying my perſonal reſpects in St James's Square. To both of you I remain indebted for all your politeneſs to me; and I muſt beg of you, Sir, to make my acknowledgements to the whole company, for the very kind attention they have ſhewn to me, and to the buſineſs. An attention I ſhall ever be proud to remember.

I am, Sir, with Mr Siddons' compliments,

Your ſincere well-wiſher,

And humble ſervant,

S. SIDDONS."

J. Jackſon Eſq; St James's Square.

LET

LET us now, my Lord, enquire into the merits of the management of laſt ſeaſon, and where Mr Kemble's vaſt claim to pre-eminence conſiſts; ſo vaſt indeed, as he himſelf holds forth, that he demands, without, with your leave, or by your leave, to ſtep into, or, to uſe his own phraſe, "to *faſten his claw* upon one half of that property," for which I have paid ſuch ſums, and ſtruggled ſo many years to create.

FIRST, then, does he ground his pretended right on his expenditure upon the fabrick? To that account he cannot put down one ſhilling.

CAN he found his pretenſions upon the ſuperiority of his company? That would be arrogance in the extreme*.

I AM aware, my Lord, that he holds out I had deceived him with reſpect to a female engagement; that has been diſproved, as your Lordſhip will obſerve in my firſt letter to the Dean of Faculty. The want of time is totally ill-founded; for I will venture to

* See a liſt of his company, with thoſe of mine, Sect. V. page 94.

affirm, that from the ſecond of November, when the leaſe commenced, to the nineteenth of January, when the houſe opened, I ſhould (with the actors then engaged) have had one of the beſt companies laſt ſeaſon that has been ſeen in Edinburgh. Had I retained the management, Mr Scriven, Mrs Atchmet, and Miſs Wallis, would, with ſome other characters of merit, have been here.

Mr Kemble's chief dependence upon the favour of the public, is from the ſuppoſed greatneſs of the rent, and his prompt payment through the ſeaſon, which has been officiouſly and erroneouſly aſſerted, even in the public prints, as "*altogether unexampled in the dramatic hiſtory of this place**."

This is a ſcandalous aſperſion upon my predeceſſors, as well as myſelf, and I cannot ſuffer it to paſs unconfuted. In the year 1762, when I was firſt here, Mr Love then manager, the ſalaries for the ſeaſon were paid punctually.

Mr

* Herald, Monday June 11. 1792.

Mr Roſs paid *three* ſeaſons.
Mr Foote paid *one*.
Mr Digges, before his misfortunes commenced, paid *four* years.
Mr Wilkinſon paid *one*.

And for *nine* ſeaſons of my management, the performers were not only paid, but ſeveral of them, at the cloſe of each ſeaſon, frequently in my debt.

That arrears have accumulated, is but too ſerious a truth: but how have thoſe debts been contracted? Not for high living; no one will accuſe me of that. Not for equipages or ſervants. Not for tavern bills, or by gambling; for I can ſafely ſay, that I never won or loſt ten pounds in my whole life. Not for feaſtings or country excurſions; for I can only put down one day in the ten years, as fairly ſet apart for a jaunt of pleaſure for my family.

No, my Lord, the accounts were *bona fide* run up in catering for the taſte of the audience, in procuring and preparing for them enter-

entertainments worthy their ſitting down to; from which they have frequently retired, acknowledging their repaſt had been delicious. You, my Lord, have ſometimes partook of them, and confeſt your ſatisfaction at the novelty of the reliſh.

In this, my Lord, I have gone ſomewhat beyond my powers, and for this I have repented in ſackcloth and aſhes; it was an exceſs that I might have ſpared; an offence ſolely againſt myſelf, for which, if I gain my own forgiveneſs, I ſhall not be apprehenſive of not procuring that of the public: For the money, as it flowed from them, ſo was it expended for their uſe.

This failure of payments, my Lord, for one year, out of ſo many on my ſide, and Mr Kemble's promptitude in that reſpect for a ſingle ſeaſon, the only one he has been in Edinburgh, is affixed, without rhyme or reaſon, by Mr Kemble, and his friends, as the great criterion of his merit.

I SHALL

I SHALL meet him, Sir, fairly upon this ground; and before I make the calculation, I am bold enough to aſſert, that there has not paſſed a year of my management, that I have not paid more money in Edinburgh, excluſive of the arrears that may latterly have occurred, than on the ſame account has been iſſued by Mr Kemble.

THE rent of laſt year, Sir, it is well known, beſides public burdens, was L.1200. This was the whole expence at which Mr Kemble ſtood in addition to the ſalaries and other current charges of each performance. His weekly ſalaries, including eight pounds a-week for himſelf and Mrs Kemble, amounted to L.53: 0: 0. But as I wiſh not in that ſcale to run too cloſe, I ſhall rate them at L.60.

I WILL allow, on the other hand, that I had no rent to pay. But then, I had other demands, to which Mr Kemble was a ſtranger. My averaged ſalaries, for the laſt three years, were L.96: 0:4; but as I have added to Mr Kemble, in the comparative ſtatement, ſo I ſhall deduct

duct from my own, rating them only at L. 90.

My ſalaries, upon an average, for ten years, were L. 90 a-week, which is L. 30 more than, upon the broadeſt calculation, thoſe of Mr Kemble, for the laſt ſeaſon, could poſſibly be rated.

A dead weight this of L. 30 a week, will amount to in 30 weeks,	L. 900	0	0
An original annuity to David Roſs,	150	0	0
To Walter Roſs, ditto, - -	100	0	0
Laid out annually on repairs, paintings, neceſſary incidents, and improvements, never leſs than - -	300	0	0
Intereſt of money laid out upon the property, over and above the natural receipts, amounting to upwards of L. 5000, - -	250	0	0
	L. 1700	0	0

Thus it evidently appears, that with a yearly receipt of L. 1700, over and above the current charges, Mr Kemble would pocket L. 500, whilſt I, with my additional expence, muſt have ſat down without a ſhilling.

If the clearance averaged L.1200 only, in that caſe Mr Kemble would receive his benefits and ſalaries free, while I muſt have been ſaddled with L.500 debt.

I CANNOT with preciſion aſcertain the receipts of the ſeaſon, as Mr Kemble had iſſued previous orders to his box-keeper to give me no information on that head: but with the advantage of Mrs Siddons in the after ſeaſon, and the ſmallneſs of his ſalaries, particularly at that period, his clearance, on the cloſe of his accounts, muſt have been conſiderable*, and his finances were certainly in ſuch a ſtate, as to enable him, without inconvenience, to diſcharge his rent and ſalaries pointedly.

IT is from this circumſtance that Mr Kemble deduces his pretended inherent right of pre-eminence. For the maintaining a promptitude of payment for a ſingle year, and that by curtailing the averaged ſalaries of the per-

* According to the beſt account I could get, Mr Kemble's profits laſt ſeaſon were from L.600 to L.800.

formers L.30 a-week, and consequently thereby producing to the public one of the worst companies that has been seen in Edinburgh during the course of my memory.

Had Mr Kemble stepped nobly forward, had he augmented the salary list, exhibited an unrivalled company, and by those exertions fallen into arrears, as many hundreds as he has obviously cleared, I could then have comprehended some pretext for a preferable claim of continuance, till, in some measure, he might have made up the losses he had sustained.

But on the very opposite principles he founds his axiom: I have possessed the Theatres for a year, says he; I have gained handsomely by them, and therefore I will compel the holder of the property to grant me a further lease. His views do not even stop here. He not only requires a preference in the lease for his great services, at half its value, but to be possessed of half the property for ever.

A CLAIM

A CLAIM ſo curious, and extravagantly chimerical, can be equalled by nothing but his viſionary notions of enforcing his demand. Conſcious of not having the law on his ſide, he purpoſes to call in the controul of the patent to his aid, which he ſuppoſes ſuperior to every legal operation. But if the powers of the patent are competent to controul the decrees of law, I truſt there is a greatneſs and goodneſs of heart in the holders of it, that will repreſs its encroachments upon right and property.

IN a feudal court, formerly, where the will of the tyrant was the peoples law, an avowal of this kind might perhaps be forced down the throats of the hearers, as a principle both rational and juſt; but in a land of liberty, where there are both law and equity, it can never ſtand a ſerious hearing. However, as it has been ſeriouſly taken up, it ſhall be ſeriouſly treated.

SOME reſpectable gentlemen, as I before obſerved, were the poſſeſſors of the theatrical property in the Canongate; they ſold that property, with the patent which they had obtain-

ed, to David Roſs; and David Roſs to J. Jackſon.

More than 20 years ago, the Edinburgh Theatre alone was let to Mr Foote for 500 guineas a-year, afterwards to Mr Digges for the ſame ſum. Some thouſand pounds, Sir, have been expended upon the houſe ſince that period; and the Glaſgow Theatre built by me, which would let ſeparate from a 100 to 200 a-year, is now become an appendage to it.

Is that, Sir, to be thrown in for nothing? Shall the long lapſe of time, the encreaſe of value in all kinds of property, the expence of the articles of life, and particularly, the augmentation of audiences, be of no additional weight in the ſcale?

The value of property riſes or falls with circumſtances, and is conſequently not to be limited, or aſcertained: I preſume, my Lord, it is conſtantly worth what it will bring.

Suppose,

SUPPOSE, my Lord, an eſtate had, at the owner's expence, been divided, fenced and limed, and by improved modes of agriculture, ſo brought into heart, that inſtead of L. 500 a year, it ſhould fetch a thouſand; and ſuppoſing the tenant who rented it after ſuch improvement for a year, ſhould ſay to the landlord, "I will not permit you to let your farm to any one elſe; I will continue in ſpite of you and law: And I will not only continue, but I will cut down your rent more than one half. Inſtead of L. 1200, I ſhall only allow you L. 500; and that for my life, if I chuſe to be your tenant ſo long."

I SHOULD wiſh to hear your Lordſhip's reply to any one of your tenants, preſuming, in reſpect to your property, to make ſuch a declaration. What would be the anſwer of Meſſrs Sheridan or Harris, to an individual in London, that ſhould venture to broach ſo new a doctrine?

WHEN the property of Covent Garden was in its infancy, a rent of L. 500, at that early period, might perhaps have been deemed ſufficient;

ficient; but augmented in value to L. 80,000; would that man be ſuppoſed in his ſenſes that ſhould ſay, you ſhall not let that vaſt property for more than L. 500 a-year?

THE limitation of theatrical property, as in any other line, muſt be ruinous to the proprietors, and detrimental to the intereſts of the community. For a ſtagnation of improvement will naturally produce a deduction of the nightly profits.

FEW adventurers, I believe, would be found ſo poſſeſſed of the *amor patriæ*, as to lay out their money, not only without hopes of advantage, but with the moral certainty of loſs.

I WAS emulous, Sir, to ſee the theatrical arrangements of Scotland on as conſequential a footing as the reſpectability of the audience deſerved: with this view I was forming ſome extenſive plans for their accommodation, as well as their amuſements, for which purpoſe I expended every ſhilling I could procure, and ſtretched my credit to the uttermoſt, in order to promote the deſired object.

I WISH

I WISH not here to arrogate to myſelf ſo much merit, as even to hint that I made theſe exertions ſolely through the reſpect I bore the profeſſion or the public. I ſhould have been a bad father, and an unjuſt huſband, had I thus thrown in my earnings, without ſome expectation of a return.

AN accumulation of property, and a right to retain it, were, I muſt confeſs, my predominating excitements to the extending its value. From an oppoſite motive, how different muſt have been my conduct! Attentive to the profits only, I ſhould have neglected even the annual repairs of the building, and run it out to the mere wreck in which I found it.

THIS, my Lord, is a maxim ſo obvious and ſo generally admitted, that I know not, whether I may not have incurred your cenſure, for thinking it neceſſary thus to ſignify its effects. Under the influence, Sir, of this conſideration, I ſhould have been tempted here to cloſe the ſubject; but from your Lordſhip's recent converſation with Meſſrs Watſon and Playfair,

Playfair, I find myſelf under the neceſſity of taking notice of the merits of the decreet-arbitral, upon which ſo much ſtreſs ſeems to be laid.

I CALLED at your Lordſhip's houſe ſome time ago, but had not the honour of finding you at home. My deſign then was to have requeſted you would not form an opinion upon the ſubject, without hearing my ſtatement of the matter.

Audi alteram partem, I ever preſumed to believe a given maxim, which no diſtinguiſhed perſonage in a judicial capacity ought ever to loſe ſight of; and I could not entertain the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion, that on this, or any other occaſion, you would not adhere to that golden rule.

READ, Sir, I intreat of you, the ſhort and ſimple miſſive in queſtion; I have annexed it for that purpoſe, with the decreet-arbitral deduced therefrom, and ſome appoſite obſervations upon both. You have only to read, my Lord, I flatter myſelf, to be convinced,

The

The truths in my two letters to the Dean of Faculty, mentioned in his decreet, which alſo accompany this, muſt carry with them their own weight.

I HAVE the honour to be, with the higheſt reſpect,

MY LORD,

Your Lordſhip's

Moſt obedient ſervant,

J. JACKSON.

The Right Honourable
The Lord Advocate for Scotland.

SOME ineffectual meetings, during the courſe of the ſeaſon, having been held, before the arbiter, upon the ſubject in queſtion, on the 19th of Auguſt 1792, the decreet-arbitral was given: the purport of which, in ſeven counts, with obſervations thereon, is hereunto ſubjoined.

SECT. XIV.

PURPORT

OF THE

DECREET-ARBITRAL*.

FIRST. The Honourable Arbiter, finds, That during the continuance of the joint concern, Mr Kemble ſhall have the ſole right of engaging performers, and of being acting manager; giving notice to Mr Jackſon of what engagements he meant to make; and if any damage ſhall ariſe from ſuch engagements, if objected to by the ſaid John Jackſon, the ſame to be made good by the ſaid Stephen Kemble: the loſs to be affixed by neutral perſons, to be choſen by each party.

DECREET-

* The miſſive upon which this decreet arbitral is founded, and which it was meant to ſubſtantiate, is inſerted *verbatim*, Sect. XII. page 202.

SECT. XIV.

OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

FIRST. No ſuch ſtipulation was ever entered into, either in writing or verbally; only through courteſy, not as a matter of right, Mr Jackſon conſented, that till his affairs were ſettled, which he ſuppoſed might take up the whole ſeaſon, Mr Kemble ſhould officiate as acting manager. But this the ſaid J. Jackſon conſidered, and declared at the time, both in converſation, and by *letter to Mr Kemble*, to be only optional on his ſide, and no part of the agreement; and by no means to be extended to another ſeaſon, provided the parties continued together, unleſs Mr Kemble's management ſhould be approved of by the ſaid J. Jackſon, and he ſhould conſent to a continuance of the ſame: So Mr Kemble at the time underſtood it, and ſo he expreſſed

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

OBSERVATIONS.

it in his firſt advertiſement to the public. So was it likewiſe pointedly ſtipulated in the ſcroll drawn up by Mr Playfair. A pleaſant kind of theatrical partnerſhip it muſt have been, where every engagement, or ideal profit, or loſs, muſt have been liable to be ſettled by an eight months arbitration, or an expenſive law plea.

But no reſtriction is placed by the Honourable Arbiter upon a more conſequential part of the buſineſs than that of the ſalary of an actor of perhaps fifteen ſhillings a-week, which might have merited at leaſt the chance of an arbitration; that is, a controul in money matters. Mr Kemble is left at large to erect caſtles on the ſtage, or build caſtles in the air, at an unlimited expence; or he may bring his pageants, that have been exhibited through the various country towns in England; or produce old ſcenes from Newcaſtle, that originally coſt him L.5, and charge for them L.500. Mr Jackſon could have no remedy from the decreet-arbitral, but acquieſcence. Does this conſtitute *an equal concern?*

SECONDLY.

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

SECONDLY. That it was not in the power of the ſaid S. Kemble, to defeat the rights of the ſaid J. Jackſon, to an equal ſhare, in conſequence of any delay on the part of the ſaid J. Jackſon to find the ſtipulated ſecurity, without a declaration from the arbiter, that he was entitled ſo to do. And that it was not in the power of the ſaid J. Jackſon to free himſelf of the ſaid obligation, by refuſing, or delaying to find the ſaid ſecurity.

THIRDLY.

OBSERVATIONS.

SECONDLY. Mr Kemble did however *find the means* of defeating this opinion of the arbiter's; for the ſeaſon paſſed away, and the Theatre cloſed, without the ſaid J. Jackſon being permitted to receive any part of the ſtipulated terms.

Mr Jackson never did refuſe to give the ſtated ſecurity, provided the terms of the miſſive had been fairly and honourably adhered to; nor did he ſhew the leaſt deſire to recede from the contract, till Mr Kemble had broke through the agreement in every inſtance; and till the ſeaſon was ſo far exhauſted, as to render any competent recompence for the injuries Mr Jackſon had ſuſtained by the delay, impoſſible.

The ſecurity expreſsly agreed upon, was repeatedly offered, and every exertion made on the part of the ſaid J. Jackſon, to procure a participation of the joint concern in the Theatre, according to the meaning and preciſe terms of the original agreement, but was conſtantly refuſed.

THIRDLY.

DECREET-ARBITRAL,

THIRDLY. Finds, that none of the facts condeſcended on by the ſaid J. Jackſon, particularly in two letters by him to the Dean of Faculty, are relevant to infer a departure on the ſide of the ſaid S. Kemble from the agreement, or to enable the ſaid J. Jackſon to be free of the contract.

He farther finds, that in all the ſubſequent ſubmiſſions, and converſations with the arbiter, that Mr Jackſon inſiſted on his right to have his bond of caution accepted, and his right to half of the emoluments of the ſeaſon declared: and that the plea, taken up at the *lateſt hour* of the buſineſs, of being free from the contract, was unjuſt, and could not be ſuſtained.

FOURTHLY.

OBSERVATIONS.

THIRDLY. Was the rejecting the ſtipulated ſecurity, no breach of contract? Was the withholding the weekly allowance; a deprivation of benefits; a refuſal to participate to Mr Jackſon one half of the profits of the ſeaſon; the excluding his family from their box; and declaring through the whole ſeaſon, that the ſaid J. Jackſon had *nothing to do* in the concern: were theſe, and many other injuries and inſults, too numerous to mention, no breaches of agreement?

MR JACKSON did certainly uſe every means in his power, to bring Mr Kemble to a fair and equitable accommodation, at the commencement, and during a great part of the ſeaſon. But after he found all was in vain, and after declarations from the ſaid S. Kemble, inimical in every ſyllable towards the eſtabliſhing a friendly intercourſe; particularly his aſſerting, that he would take care to run Mr Jackſon in debt before the end of the ſeaſon; (a thing very eaſy to accompliſh in the adjuſtment of accompts, where there was to be no controll); and after his affirming,

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

FOURTHLY. He finds, the ſeaſon being finiſhed without loſs, the delay that took place, as to the ſufficiency of the caution offered by the ſaid J. Jackſon, would be attended with no loſs to the ſaid S. Kemble.

THEREFORE,

OBSERVATIONS.

that if the ſaid J. Jackſon was to have any concern in the profits, he would ſhut the houſe the moment the rent was paid, and not ſuffer his ſiſter to come down, ſo as to participate any advantage to Mr Jackſon.

THEN indeed Mr Jackſon did declare to the arbiter, in writing, that he could not think of giving any ſecurity, or of having farther intercourſe with Mr Kemble; as believing the agreement infringed upon and broken altogether, on the ſide of the ſaid S. Kemble. This was on the 18th day of April, which could not be called the *lateſt hour* of the buſineſs, as the decreet-arbitral was not given till Auguſt 9th, a ſpace of near four months after.

FOURTHLY. The delay was not on Mr Jackſon's ſide, but obviouſly on that of Mr Kemble, in not accepting of the ſecurity, agreed upon originally, and ſo ſettled by him, before his departure from Edinburgh.

MR JACKSON did offer the ſecurity as originally ſettled, but it appears that Mr Kemble, after his arrival at Sheffield, had

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

THEREFORE, with conſent of the ſaid S. Kemble, finds the ſaid J. Jackſon entitled to one half of the free profits of the Theatre, without making any allowance to the ſaid S. Kemble, or Mrs Kemble his wife, for their performance.

BUT under the ſpecial proviſo, that in caſe the ſaid J. Jackſon ſhall not, within fourteen days, agree to implement this decreet-arbitral, *and every part thereof*, he ſhall ceaſe to have any right to a ſhare of his profits of the preſent year; and in caſe he ſhould afterwards acquieſce, or be compelled to perform his part thereof, by courſe of law; in that caſe he finds, that four pounds a-week to Mr Kemble, and the ſame to his wife, ſhall be deducted out of the ſaid J. Jackſon's ſhare of the profits of the ſeaſon.

FIFTHLY.

OBSERVATIONS.

been induced to recede from that part of the agreement. He ſays in a letter to Mr Jackſon, from thence, " I am directed by my friends, not to accept of any ſecurity but ſuch as Mr Gibſon ſhall think ſufficient."

How does it appear that the ſeaſon paſſed without loſs? The fact certainly was ſo, but Mr Kemble has been careful hitherto to ſhew no accompts of thoſe profits to Mr Jackſon. The arbiter does not ſay that he ſaw any ſuch accompts; and his decreet neglects to aſcertain the amount.

Should Mr Kemble refuſe to implement his part of the decreet-arbitral, the arbiter finds no penalty againſt him. No *vice verſa* in that caſe, of four pounds a-week to Mr Jackſon and his wife, to be deducted out of Mr Kemble's half profits. The arbiter takes no notice of, and gives no recompence for the loſs and diſtreſs the ſaid J. Jackſon ſuffered by being deprived of his ſalary, at a time when Mr Kemble knew well, that it was the only reſource the ſaid J. Jackſon then had, for the daily ſubſiſtence of himſelf and family.

FIFTHLY.

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

FIFTHLY. He finds the ſaid S. Kemble, and the ſaid J. Jackſon, bound to continue a joint concern in the Theatre in *time coming*, *preciſely* on the ſame terms as for the preſent year, That is to ſay, on an equal participation of the free profits, finding caution for performance, &c. &c.

AND

OBSERVATIONS.

FIFTHLY. How can this article be inforced or fulfilled? The houſe is at the diſpoſal of the truſtee for the creditors; it was offered by him to Mr Kemble for the ſame rent, and refuſed. He was informed that other offers were made, and would be accepted, but he choſe to remain ſilent.

THE houſe was accordingly advertiſed in the public papers both in Edinburgh and London, and taken by Mrs Eſten at L. 1000. Mr Kemble afterwards offered L. 500, which of courſe was declined.

CAN the decreet-arbitral then compel an impoſſibility? Or how is this part of it conformable to the miſſive? That expreſsly ſays, if either *inclines*, he ſhall be entitled to the ſame ſhare in *time coming*. Does the word *incline* ſignify *you ſhall*, or can the term *option* be converted into *compulſion?* Or, could that difficulty be got over, the Theatre is now *let*, irredeemably ſo, and conſequently, either of the parties concerned being leſſee, is rendered impoſſible.

HERE

DECREET-ARBITRAL

AND in caſe the ſaid J. Jackſon ſhall, by a ſettlement with his creditors, or otherwiſe, regain poſſeſſion of the Theatre, he ſhall be bound and obliged to communicate the ſame to the joint concern, upon receiving L. 500 a-year rent for the two Theatres of Edinburgh and Glaſgow, or ſuch greater ſum, as ſhall be fixed on by his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, and the Right Honourable Henry Dundas.

SIXTHLY.

OBSERVATIONS.

HERE is a ſtretch of power, according to my humble conception, totally inconſiſtent with law. It is no leſs, than the wreſting by violence, L. 500 a-year, out of the hands of the proprietor.

THIS is alſo in direct violation of the former part of this very fifth article, which ſays, that the parties ſhall continue "preciſely upon the ſame footing as the preſent year." Now to be *preciſely upon the ſame footing*, they muſt enter upon the ſame terms; that is, a tack of the Theatres at L. 1200 a-year rent. Or they muſt be put up to roup, and fetch what they will bring. If the parties then become tackſmen, they will enter upon the ſame equal terms.

THE idea of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, or the Right Honourable Mr Dundas, becoming arbiters, or aſſeſſors, of the rent of a Theatre, is inconſiſtent. They never would ſtep forward by a ſtrong hand, to deprive a ſet of creditors from making the moſt of an

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

OBSERVATIONS.

eſtate veſted in them; or to prevent the ſureties from making good their obligations, by getting the ſame rent for a property, which it formerly brought; or at leaſt, as much as it would fairly and openly fetch.

THIS article is likewiſe beyond meaſure *ultra vires*, as never ſo much as hinted at in the miſſive, and conſequently totally out of the queſtion. It is alſo obviouſly unequal. The ſum, which it muſt coſt Mr Jackſon to regain poſſeſſion of his property, will amount to L. 7000. Of this, by the decreet-arbitral, he is to give Mr Kemble the one half.

NOW ſuppoſe the Theatre was to be ſold, and Mr Kemble ſhould become the purchaſer, is there any clauſe in the decreet-arbitral, that ſhall compel Mr Kemble to participate to Mr Jackſon, the one half of the property? Where then can be the equality, or the impartiality, of this part of the decreet-arbitral?

DECREET-ARBITRAL.

SIXTHLY, Finds, that it ſhall not be competent to the perſon refuſing to bid for, or become leſſee of the Theatre, in oppoſition to the party willing. And repeats, in caſe the ſaid J. Jackſon regain poſſeſſion of the Theatre, and refuſes to obtemper this decreet-arbitral, he ſhall be bound and obliged to let the ſame to the ſaid S. Kemble, for a rent of L. 500 a-year, till he ſhall chuſe to take a joint concern with him.

SEVENTHLY, Decrees and ordains the party refuſing to pay a fine of L. 500 Sterling, by and attour performance.

OBSERVATIONS.

SIXTHLY. This is rendered unneceſſary, as the Theatre is let, and cannot therefore be bid for, by one, or the other. The latter part of this article is anſwered in the objections to the fifth count.

SEVENTHLY. It is left to the learned in the law to determine, how far a penalty is here competent, as no ſuch thing is mentioned in the miſſive; and, if conſiſtent with the agreement, on which ſide ſhould the forfeit be levied? ſhall it be upon him who has been forcibly thruſt out of the concern, and deprived of every participation of advantage reſulting therefrom? or upon the one who has enjoyed the whole emoluments of the ſeaſon, without the ſmalleſt hinderance or moleſtation from the injured party?

It ſhould here be obſerved, that the moſt material part of the agreement in the *miſſive*, is never hinted at in the *decreet-arbitral*, *viz.* That the profits ſhall be divided weekly. No proviſion is made for, or the leaſt notice taken of this clauſe.

And although, by Mr Kemble's *own ſtate* of the agreement, drawn up by his own man of buſineſs, and by his own particular order, eight pounds a-week, and two *clear benefits*, were to have been enjoyed by Mr Jackſon, ſo as to have placed him upon terms of equality with Mr Kemble; yet, deprived of theſe advantages, which, the benefits particularly *in his ſituation*, could not have been of very inconſiderable import, no recompence, not the ſmalleſt acknowledgement, or reſtitution, is allowed, or the leaſt notice taken of theſe deprivations or loſſes by the arbiter. Can this award be deemed rational or reciprocal?

In ſhort, the Honourable Arbiter, inſtead of deciding upon the joint miſſives, between the parties concerned, has formed an ENTIRE NEW AGREEMENT, compoſed of articles never ſo much as dreamt of by them at the time of exchanging thoſe miſſives; and which, thro' its whole tenor, bears not the ſmalleſt ſimilitude to the true ſpirit of the *original contract*.

SECT. XV.

Treaty with Mrs Atchmet—Her character as an actreſs—Value of divided property explained—Mr Colman's ſhare of Covent Garden—Explanatory remarks.

On a reperuſal of the foregoing ſheets, I find it expedient to ſubjoin a few pages, not only by way of explanation, but alſo to add freſh matter, which had either eſcaped my attention, or had not ſooner come to my knowledge. In my firſt addreſs to the Dean of Faculty, I mentioned Mrs Atchmet; concerning whom, as the buſineſs had been diſcuſſed before the arbiter, and as my obſervations to him on that occaſion were intended for his peruſal only, the paſſage, to a general reader, muſt therefore appear ſomewhat obſcure, and conſequently demands an explanation.

At the time of my agreement with Mr Kemble,

Kemble, among the performers engaged to me for the ſeaſon, I mentioned Mrs Atchmet. I told him that ſhe was *not* in articles, for reaſons I particularly mentioned, and which have been already explained; but that I looked upon her being with me as a certainty. Mr Kemble enquired Mrs Atchmet's ſalary. I told him I had propoſed four pounds a-week. He replied, it was too much, and "hoped in God ſhe would not come; for," ſays he, "ſhe is exactly in Mrs Kemble's and Mrs Whitlock's way, and what ſhall we do with her?" It was agreed upon, that I ſhould write, and give him the earlieſt intimation of her reſolves. I did ſo. My letter informed him, that ſhe thought the ſalary too little. I added, meaning thereby that he might have an opportunity, if he choſe it, of making her a farther offer, *ſhe was at Shrewſbury*; and, in the inſtant, I was not a little pleaſed that I had it in my power to relieve him from an engagement he then deemed ſo great a burthen.

At our firſt interview with the *arbiter*, when every thing *ſeemed* to be in a fair way of adjuſtment, Mr Kemble unexpectedly,

tedly, and, I am ſure, very unjuſtly, laid to my charge the weakneſs of his then company, affirming, that in a letter to him at Sheffield, which he would produce in *half an hour*, I had expreſly declared, that Mrs Atchmet, was engaged. I pointedly denied the aſſertion. The Dean at the time thought the matter of ſuch conſequence, as to adjourn the meeting, and to give a *written order* that the letters reſpecting Mrs Atchmet ſhould be produced by both parties. I complied*. Mr Kemble did not. The charge therefore which he had thought proper at

 that

* Letters from Mrs Atchmet to Mr Jackſon, produced to the arbiter.

London, May 4. 1791.

DEAR SIR,

"FROM a knowledge of your character, and a ſtrong wiſh I have long had, to pay a viſit to Scotland, when you have a vacancy fit for me, I would be happy to have a ſituation on your ſtage. As to ſalary, we *can't* differ, as I would leave that *entirely to yourſelf*. I requeſt my compliments to Mrs Jackſon.

C. ANN ATCHMET."

No. 7. Arundel-ſtreet, Strand.

I REPLIED, that I ſhould be happy to ſee her in Edinburgh, and would give her a ſalary equal to her merit. I alſo left it to her option, if ſhe was not engaged in the ſummer, to join the company at Aberdeen. This Mrs Atchmet declined, as ſhe did not chuſe to come ſo far north; but accepted of

that period to alledge againſt me, was not ſubſtantiated; and the blame for any deficiency in the company of 1792, muſt conſequently be all *his own*.

WITH reſpect to Mrs Atchmet's motive for changing her intention of paying a viſit to Edinburgh, I leave it to the deciſion of the reader, on comparing her two letters in the notes, which are inſerted for that purpoſe.

MRS Atchmet, of whom I am ſpeaking, was a pupil of Mr Whyte's, an eminent ſchoolmaſter

of my offer at Edinburgh, and wiſhed to be informed when the houſe opened. In this ſituation matters ſtood, when my agreement with Mr Kemble took place. On Mrs Atchmet's being acquainted with the ſalary I propoſed, and the *change of management*, I was favoured with the following letter:—

Shrewſbury, November 14. 1791.

DEAR SIR,

"I BELIEVE you muſt be ſenſible it would not be in my power to undertake ſuch a journey, and provide ſuch dreſſes as I wear, for the terms you have offered. I beg you will make my compliments, and thanks acceptable to Mrs Jackſon, for her polite offer of attention. And am,

Your obliged,

C. ANN ATCHMET."

J. Jackſon, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

ter in Dublin*. She made her firſt appearance on the Crow-ſtreet ſtage in that city, in the part of *Imoinda*. I was accidentally one of the audience that evening. Her figure was unexceptionable, and her abilities promiſing. She ſucceeded in the profeſſion; and continued upon the ſame Theatre, ſupplying a principal line of characters, for ſome ſeaſons. I ſaw her afterwards in *Sir Harry Wildair*. She looked the eaſy elegant man of faſhion, and her performance through the part was pleaſing. Her caſt is ſoft tragedy and genteel comedy.

My not acceding to the terms of Mr Biſſet's ſcroll, as altered from the original miſſive, was not becauſe I wiſhed to interfere in the ſtage management for the ſeaſon; that I had by choice declined, having occaſion to attend to matters of another nature. My objection was founded upon very different principles; it was, becauſe I could not bring myſelf to conſent to a reduction of a reverſionary property of conſiderable value.

* Samuel Whyte, Eſq; preceptor of the grammar ſchool, Grafton-ſtreet, Dublin.

THE property of a Theatre, divided into ſhares, with the *right of management* tacked only to *one;* that individual ſhare, ſo advantaged, becomes of infinitely more value than any of the others. Few theatrical people would wiſh to embark in a ſcheme where they could have no ſway in the conduct of it; and where their money muſt be hazarded upon the caprice of another.

As an inſtance of the validity of the above reaſoning, I ſhall beg leave to obſerve, that when Mr Colman retired from the management of Covent Garden Theatre, the quarter ſhares, of which he poſſeſſed one, were eſtimated at about L. 15,000 each. But the right of management, being an appendage by an original contract to Mr Colman's ſhare, it conſequently ſold for more than L. 20,000. If my information was correct at the time, I think the purchaſe was L. 22,000.

BY the ſame rule, the theatrical property of Edinburgh, being divided into halves, and the *right of management* attached to one of them, that half, ſo circumſtanced, will be of courſe, at leaſt one third more valuable than the other. The idea, therefore, that I, who was

ſo

ſo well acquainted with theatrical matters, ſhould run with my eyes open into ſo ruinous a meaſure, can only be equalled in abſurdity, by holding out, that when I was going to enter into a partnerſhip for a year in the *rent* of a houſe, I was bargaining to alienate the one half of the property, and expectations of myſelf and family, *for ever*.

" ——— *Credat Judeus appella.*"

No ſuch thing was ever ſpoke of, or hinted, by either myſelf or Mr Kemble, at the time of exchanging the miſſives; nor had I heard the leaſt ſuggeſtion of ſo extraordinary a claim, at the time I addreſſed my two letters to the arbiter; the ſubject, of courſe, was not mentioned in either of them; nor till I read the ſcroll of the decreet, had I the leaſt notion that ſuch an extravagant idea could be ſtarted; and therefore had no previous opportunity of diſcuſſing the queſtion.

It will be neceſſary, before I take leave of the ſubject, to appriſe the reader, that while my affairs with my creditors remained unſettled, Mr Kemble, who had contrived to make himſelf *ſole* in the leaſe, invariably objected to my having any concern with him; but

but no ſooner had I ſettled the compoſition, and had a proſpect of regaining poſſeſſion of my property, than he began to change his *tone*. He then conſented to allow me to become a partner with him, on certain conditions, in the *paſt ſeaſon*, provided I would give up to him one half of *my property for ever*. Is it poſſible for any impartial reader to blame me for declining a bargain ſo confeſſedly unequal?

WHILE my compoſition was pending, Mr Kemble uſed every effort in his power to *prevent it*; and when he was at laſt informed, that, contrary to his expectations, it was completed, he exclaimed, "I could never have thought it: That is the worſt news I have heard ſince I came to Edinburgh *".

READER,

* It is evident, that when Mr Kemble, with his uſual *liberality* and *candour*, made this very Chriſtian-like declaration, he had not the ſmalleſt idea of poſſeſſing a claim upon my property. His views of equalization had not at that period been ſo far advanced. From November 2. to March the 16th, when he was pleaſed to make that ſingular declaration, was a ſpace of fourteen weeks, during all which time Mr Kemble had not embibed the new light of an equal participation. He would otherwiſe have exclaimed, with propriety, "That is the *beſt news* I have heard!" For ſo it muſt have been, if my agreement had obliged me to *divide* the property between us.

READER, COMMENT UPON THAT!

THE worſt news that Mr Kemble had heard ſince he came to Edinburgh was, that a man in misfortunes ſhould be able to compromiſe with his creditors, and retain bread for his children. To a mind, ſuſceptible of ſo uncharitable an idea, I ſhould recommend the following lines of a great poet:——

"Ne'er be elated, while one man's oppreſs'd;
"Never dejected, while another's bleſs'd."

REPORTS having been induſtriouſly circulated, that the leaſe of the Theatre, for the preſent year, had been privately let to Mrs Eſten, with an intention to diſappoint Mr Kemble's right, under the decreet-arbitral; and that I had ſtipulated a participation of the profits under that leaſe, in the ſame manner as I ſhould have been entitled to from him, had he fulfilled his agreement with me; I find it neceſſary, in explaining my tranſactions with Mr Kemble, to contradict thoſe reports; and, by permiſſion of the truſtee, to recount the circumſtances attending Mrs Eſten's leaſe, in which I have no intereſt or concern

concern whatever, farther than the advantage which may reſult from the rent, after the compoſition to my creditors ſhall be ſatisfied.

I SHALL candidly confeſs, that the principles of the decreet appeared to me ſo very different from the intention of the original agreement, that I had determined to have no concern in a future leaſe of the Theatre, rather than be involved in a partnerſhip, upon terms ſo very unequal, and from which I plainly foreſaw the moſt ruinous conſequences; and this my intention, as the reader has been informed, I communicated both to the arbiter and Mr Kemble, before the decree was iſſued; at the ſame time, I muſt declare, that had it been in my power, which it was not, I would not have uſed any intereſt to prevent his getting the leaſe, as the higheſt bidder; at an inferior rent, I certainly ſhould. For whatever my private opinion of Mr Kemble's mode of acting might be, my own, and my family's intereſt, was interwoven with that of my creditors; and it is obvious, the higher the rent, the ſooner theſe would be paid, and thoſe once more provided for.

IN

In my preſence, long before the time for letting a new leaſe, he was offered the Theatre for one, or, I believe, for two years, at the ſame rent; but, for reaſons not then divulged, he declined the propoſal.

It appeared, that by paragraphs, induſtriouſly circulated in the London papers, where a competition for a leaſe of the Theatre was only to be expected, that effectual meaſures had been uſed to prevent any theatrical perſon from offering, provided a public ſale had taken place; and from what afterwards happened, it was evident that Mr Kemble had formed a plan to procure the leaſe at a rent of L. 500; or at leaſt, that the holders of the patent ſhould fix the rent, inſtead of allowing the Theatres, like any other property, to bring a fair price in the market; a plan which Mr Kemble had no title to inſiſt upon, more than any other perſon whatſoever; and which, I have no doubt, from the annexed papers, will appear in itſelf unjuſt.

At a general meeting of creditors, held the 21ſt of July laſt, theſe facts were ſtated, when the truſtees were authoriſed to let the Theatres,

either by public roup or private bargain, as they ſhould judge neceſſary; and at this meeting Mr Kemble's agent was preſent. The leaſe was immediately advertiſed in the different Edinburgh papers, and in ſome of thoſe in London.

THE truſtees having received no offer from Mr Kemble, entered into an agreement with Mrs Eſten; and the report of their conduct was communicated to the creditors, at a meeting called for that purpoſe, on the 3d of September, where a memorial, containing a ſtatement of the tranſaction, was laid before them*.

THE creditors, after conſidering this memorial, with every objection that Mr Kemble's agent could ſuggeſt, approved of the proceedings of the truſtees, and authoriſed them to carry the tranſaction into effect; to publiſh their approbation in the newſpapers, and to tranſmit a memorial of the caſe to the Duke of Hamilton and the Right Honourable Mr Dundas, as holders of the patent.

IT may be proper to inform the public, that the Duke gave a direct conſent to the leaſe,

* See Appendix, No. XI.

leaſe, and Mr Dundas, the other truſtee, has declared in writing, that he will not interfere in the matter on the preſent occaſion.

THE reader will not probably be inclined to believe, that Mr Kemble could form ſo wild a ſcheme, as that of compelling a body of creditors to accept of a rent which was inadequate to the value of the ſubject, from which they were to expect payment, and, of courſe, to inrich himſelf at their expence. That he, however, did ſo, appears from his letter to the truſtees, whoſe reply, for the reaſons there ſtated, put a direct negative upon it.

I SHALL requeſt the reader to decide whether the truſtee, in juſtice to the truſt repoſed in him, could have acted otherwiſe. I muſt certainly have deemed his conduct highly reprehenſible, had he accepted of L.500 from any perſon whatſoever, when he could have procured L.1000. And I can hardly ſuppoſe there is a ſingle creditor, or a diſintereſted individual among the world at large, that would diſſent from this opinion.

WHETHER Mr Kemble's claim intitles him to the ſupport of the public, in pretending to open a Theatre, in oppoſition to that eſtabliſhed by law, which has ſerved for the entertainment of this metropolis for almoſt thirty years, and which he has publickly adverti ſed his intention of doing, contrary to the exiſting laws of the kingdom, I leave to the reader's determination. In order to be enabled to decide upon the ſubject with preciſion, I am humbly of opinion, that I cannot conclude the preſent ſubject better, than by laying before the public an abſtract of the penal ſtatutes relating to theatrical repreſentations in Scotland.

STATUTE, 12*th* QUEEN ANNE,

ENTITLED, "An act for the more effectual puniſhing rogues, vagabonds, ſturdy-beggars, and vagrants."

"THAT all perſons pretending themſelves to be patent-gatherers, or collectors for priſons, goals or hoſpitals, and wandering abroad for that purpoſe; all fencers, bear-wards, common players of interludes, minſtrels, jugglers, &c. &c. ſhall be deemed rogues and vagabonds."

"THAT

"THAT any perſon apprehended as a rogue or a vagabond, may, if the juſtice or juſtices think proper, be ordered to be ſtripped naked from the middle, and openly whipped, until his or her body be bloody; or may be ſent to the houſe of correction, there to be kept at hard labour; or to the common goal of the ſaid county, there to remain until the next quarter ſeſſion, to be holden for the ſaid county."

10*th* GEORGE II. *February* 1. 1736.

"WHEREAS, by an act of parliament made in the twelfth year of her late majeſty Queen Anne, it was enacted, "That all perſons pretending themſelves to be patent-gatherers, or collectors for priſons, goals, or hoſpitals; all fencers, bear-wards, common players of interludes, and other perſons therein named and expreſſed, ſhall be deemed rogues and vagabonds.

"AND whereas ſome doubts have ariſen, concerning ſo much of the ſaid act as relates to common players of interludes; now, for explaining and amending the ſame, be it declared and enacted, that from and after the

24th

24th day of June 1737, any perſon who ſhall for hire, gain, or reward, act, repreſent, or perform, or cauſe to be acted, repreſented, or performed, any interlude, tragedy, comedy, opera, play, farce, or other entertainment of the ſtage, or any part or parts thereof, in caſe ſuch perſon ſhall not have any legal ſettlement in the place, where the ſame ſhall be acted, repreſented or performed, without authority, by virtue of letters patent from his Majeſty, or a licence from the Lord Chamberlain, ſhall be deemed a rogue and a vagabond, and ſhall be liable to all ſuch penalties and puniſhments as are appointed by the ſaid act.

"AND be it further enacted, that if any perſon *having*, or *not having*, a legal ſettlement as aforeſaid, ſhall, for hire, gain, or reward, act, repreſent, or perform, or cauſe to be performed, &c. Every ſuch perſon ſhall, for ſuch offence, forfeit the ſum of fifty pounds. And, in caſe the fifty pounds be paid, ſuch offender ſhall not, for the ſame offence, ſuffer any of the pains or penalties inflicted by the ſaid recited act."

"AND

"AND for offences committed in that part of Great Britain, called Scotland, by action of ſummary complaint before the Court of Seſſion or Juſticiary there; or for offences committed in any part of Great Britain, in a ſummary way, before two juſtices of the peace, for any county or place where the offence ſhall be committed, by the oath or oaths of *one* or more witneſſes, to be levied by diſtreſs, the overplus to be returned; and for want of effects, to be put to the houſe of correction, or county goal, to hard labour, for any time not exceeding ſix months: one half of the penalty to the informer, the other to the poor of the pariſh.

10*th* GEORGE III. *c.* 27.

"AND, whereas a licenced play-houſe is much wanted in that part of the united kingdom called Scotland, be it therefore further enacted, That it ſhall and may be lawful to his Majeſty, his heirs and ſucceſſors, to grant letters patent, for eſtabliſhing a theatre or play-houſe in the city of Edinburgh, or ſuburbs thereof, which ſhall be intitled to all the privileges, and ſubjected to all the regulations to which any theatre

theatre or play-houſe in Great Britain is intitled and ſubjected*."

Anno 28th GEORGII III. 1788.

"AN ACT to enable juſtices of the peace to licence theatrical repreſentations occaſionally, under the reſtrictions therein contained.

"THAT it ſhall and may be lawful to and for the juſtices of the peace of any county, to grant a licence for the performance of ſuch tragedies, comedies, interludes, operas, plays, or farces, as now are, or hereafter ſhall be acted, performed, or repreſented, at either of the patent or licenced theatres in the city of *Weſtminſter*, or as ſhall, in the manner preſcribed by law, have been ſubmitted to the inſpection of the Lord Chamberlain, ſo as ſuch place be not within twenty miles of the cities of *London*, *Weſtminſter*, or *Edinburgh*."

* The original patent was granted September 2. 1767, and renewed October 12. 1788.

SECT. XVI.

The Gentle Shepherd—Obſervations upon it—Its eſtimation as a paſtoral—As a ſtage performance—Its introduction upon the Canongate Theatre—Caſe of Drummond the printer—Effects thereof upon the finances of the Theatre at the time—Upon ſtage prejudices in general.

In a recital of the dramatic occurrences of the city of Edinburgh, there are two circumſtances that cannot be paſſed ſilently or ſuperficially over: Theſe are, the introduction of the *Gentle Shepherd*, and the performance of the tragedy of *Douglas*, already mentioned in our account of the Canongate Theatre.

The merits of thoſe pieces are ſo well known and eſtabliſhed, as to render any comment upon them almoſt unneceſſary. The firſt, confeſſedly in the higheſt ſtile of paſtoral, ſhould rather be claſſed among the poetic, than the dramatic works of the preſent century. But the mode in which it found its

way to the ſtage, the eſtimation it acquired, its future conſequences, and the local popularity it ſtill continues to retain, muſt ever claim for itſelf and its author, a diſtinguiſhed ſtation in the Scottiſh Stage liſt.

It was firſt uſhered into the world as a bucolick, under the title of PATIE and ROGER. The author*, as is well known, compoſed this paſtoral in the neighbourhood of the Pentland Hills, amidſt that native ſimplicity he ſo truly repreſents. Some old people, I am informed, are yet living in thoſe ſequeſtered ſolitudes, who remember hearing him recite his own verſes, from whom they learnt many of his ſongs by rote, and ſo transferred them to their children, the ſhepherds, which they joyouſly chant, at this day, among the ruſtic ſcenery the poet's pen ſo delightfully pictured.

AFTER

* Allan Ramſay, the author of the *Gentle Shepherd*, and ſome other beautiful Scots poems, was a bookſeller in the front of the Luckenbooths. He had a dramatic turn, and, I find, had ſome connection with, or intereſt in, the property and fixtures of the room in Carrubber's Cloſe, while it was occupied as a Theatre. He was father to Ramſay the celebrated painter.

AFTER the troubles of forty-five, before the heat of party had ſubſided, a printer, called Robert Drummond, having publiſhed a ſatyrical poem againſt the Duke of Cumberland and other reſpectable characters of the Whig intereſt, was proſecuted before the magiſtrates for the ſame, who ſentenced him to the pillory, and a year's baniſhment from the city of Edinburgh*. The reſult

* "November 1747. A defamatory poem having appeared about the middle of November, ſeveral of the copies were ſeized, and Robert Drummond printer was taken up, accuſed of being the publiſher. The bailies, before whom the matter was brought, found, that the poem contained many ſcandalous, ſeditious, calumnious, and malicious expreſſions, tending moſt unjuſtly to defame George Drummond, Eſq; *preſent* Lord Provoſt of Edinburgh, Walter Groſſet, inſpector-general of the cuſtoms, Principal Wiſhart, Meſſrs Logan, Glen, and Webſter, miniſters of Edinburgh, and others of ſtill higher and more reſpectable characters, and that it was publiſhed and printed by the ſaid Robert Drummond. Therefore, they ordained him to be carried to priſon, and thence, on the 25th of November, betwixt the hours of twelve and one, to the croſs of Edinburgh, there to ſtand bare headed, with a label on his breaſt, inſcribed thus, *for printing and publiſhing, a falſe, ſcandalous, and defamatory libel*, till all the copies ſeized of the poem, ſhould be burnt by the hangman; then to lie in priſon, till he ſhould give bond to remove out of the city and liberties, and not return for a year, on pain of L. 100 ſterling, and

of this judicial decree, was the ſhutting up the printing-office of the unfortunate citizen, and leaving idle his apprentices and journeymen.

AMONG theſe arrangers of types, thus thrown out of employment, were ſome, who, by their familiarity with letters, had neceſſarily acquired the art of reading. They naturally, therefore, applied to the ſtory books, Jack the Giant-Killer, and others, they found lying about, for their amuſement. An edition of the *Gentle Shepherd* had been printed by their maſter a ſhort time previous to his confinement; one of the copies of that work fell into their hands. They ſtudied ſome of its detached ſcenes, and at length, aſſociating with others of their own claſs in life, they formed themſelves into a company, got perfect

and ſuffering impriſonment till the remainder of the year was run; and to be deprived of the privileges of a freeman for a year. An application was made to the Court of Juſticiary for an alteration of this ſentence, but without effect. He was accordingly brought to the croſs on the 25th, and the copies burnt before him; and then he was carried back to priſon" SCOTS MAG. 1747 p. 553.

fect in the whole opera*; and, having obtained the manager's leave to perform it upon the Theatre then in the Canongate, for the benefit of their maſter, they acquitted themſelves ſo well, as to procure permiſſion to repeat it.

THE puniſhment of the printer being upon party principles, and, at that period, rather an unpopular meaſure, the object of the charity had a ſtrong and favourable claim to the attention of the populace. On the firſt night's performance of the opera, the houſe was crowded in every part; and it was repeated ſeveral ſucceſſive nights to ſuch numerous audiences, that tiers of benches of

* *Dramatis Perſonæ* of the Gentle Shepherd, when performed by the Printers.

Sir William Worthy,	— —	* John Hamilton;
Patie,	(A Goldſmith,)	John Chriſtie;
Roger,	(An Exciſeman,)	John Chapman;
Glaud,	— —	* Robert Fleming;
Symon,	— —	* John Livingſton;
Bauldy,	— —	* George Rankin.
Peggy,	(A Goldſmith,)	William Forreſt;
Madge, / *Elſpa,*	—	* Alexander Stewart;
Mauſe,		———
Jenny,		———

Thoſe marked thus * were Drummond's printers.

were erected upon the ſtage for the accommodation of the ſpectators†.

A PASSAGE in a prologue, 1749, "from J. Harris, by Mr Philips riding on an aſs," I preſume, alluded to this.

"In the gallery, ſide boxes, *on the ſtage*, in the pit,
"What's your critic, your beau, your keeper, your wit."
SCOTS MAG.

BY this unexpected adventitious aid, the diſtreſſes of the printer were in ſome meaſure relieved, and the finances of the manager for the ſeaſon augmented. But a more durable, and general advantage, was the conſequence of theſe repreſentations of the *Gentle Shepherd*, to the Scottiſh Stage.

THE multitude, being thus *dragged*, as it were, by the joint principles of charity and party zeal, to the interdicted regions of pleaſure, they were induced to taſte the *forbidden fruit*, and, pleaſed with the reliſh, they fed

† Mr Arnot calls them, "occaſional galleries over the ſtage*," but they were ranges of ſeats on each ſide, from the ſtage door to the firſt wing; ſo that the performers could make their entrances and exits, and the ſcenery work in the centre.

* Hiſtory of Edinburgh, p. 368.

fed plenteouſly. Finding themſelves not *poiſoned* by the ſweets, they returned to the feaſt with an increaſed appetite, and brought with them freſh gueſts to partake of the enticing fare.

THE firſt ſtroke at the rooted prejudices, that had ſo long prevailed againſt the ſtage repreſentations in Scotland, was thus given by the production of a native bard, and the intervention of accident.

MR CALLENDER revived the *Gentle Shepherd*, I believe, in 1754, in a very reſpectable ſtile. Recourſe was however obliged to be had to auxiliaries, to ſupply ſome of the characters.

* Gentle Shepherd, as performed by Mr Callender's company.

Sir William Worthy,	—	Mr Holland;
Patie,	—	Mr Digges;
Roger,	—	* Mr Thomſon;
Symon,	—	* Mr Niven;
Glaud,	—	Mr Evans;
Bauldy,	—	Mr Lancaſhire.
Peggy,	—	* Miſs Currie;
Jenny,	—	Mrs Ward;
Mauſe,	—	Mrs Hamilton;
Elſpa,	—	* Mrs Miller;
Madge,	—	* Mrs Miller.

Thoſe marked * were not belonging to the company.

racters. Scarce a ſeaſon has ſince paſſed without a repetition of the opera: but the aſſiſtance of the towns-people has conſtantly been called in for ſome character or other, as it is almoſt an impoſſibility for a company of comedians, ſelected from England, to fill up the parts with propriety, particularly before a Scotch audience.

I FIND an octavo publication of this piece in 1725. The author favoured the world with a quarto edition of it in 1728. And it was beautifully reprinted, in large quarto, by Foulis of Glaſgow, 1788, with a variety of characteriſtic prints, local views, and a buſt of the author, by Mr Allan.

THIS piece was lately moderniſed, and decorated with an Engliſh garb*; but, deprived of its native phraſeology, its peculiarity of idiom, and its melodious ſimplicity, it ſunk beneath the ſuperiority of the original work. For whenever the *Gentle Shepherd* is meant to charm, either in the cloſet, or on the ſtage, it muſt be in the words and airs of ALLAN RAMSAY.

* By Richard Tickle, Eſq; It was ably executed, ſtrongly caſt, and excellently performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

SECT. XVII.

Obſervations upon the tragedy of Douglas—The Reverend John Home proſecuted as the author of the play—And other miniſters for being preſent at its repreſentation—The tragedy vindicated from the imputations and criticiſms of the preſbytery.

ALTHOUGH the firſt impreſſion had been made againſt the ſtrong holds of theatrical prejudice, by the ſucceſsful exhibitions of the *Gentle Shepherd*; the *coup de main*, to the before impregnable fortreſs of ſuperſtition and prevalent ideas, ſo diſadvantageous to ſtage repreſentations in general, was left for the pen of the Reverend John Home, the author of *Douglas*, firſt performed, as we mentioned in its place, upon the Canongate ſtage in 1756*.

* See page 31.

THE preſbytery of Scotland, as formerly obſerved, had joined in, or rather, led the cry againſt all dramatic repreſentations, notwithſtanding their having confeſſedly originated, in modern Europe, from their own body *.

FOR a member of holy orders to be ſeen within the walls of a play-houſe, was anathematized by their aſſemblies as a crime of the deepeſt die. What then muſt have been their indignation and aſtoniſhment to be informed, that, in open violation of their moſt poſitive injunctions, a clergyman of the church of Scotland had not only preſumed to write a dramatic compoſition, but had procured it to be repreſented upon the unlicenced Theatre of their metropolis!

THEY proceeded immediately to the ſtrongeſt and moſt violent meaſures. They ſummoned before the aſſembly, ſuch members of their community as had dared to be ſeen within the doors of the excommunicated fabric; publickly cenſured them, and ſuſpended one, *pro tempore*, from his paſtoral office,

* See page 4.

fice *; they alſo ordered circular letters to other preſbyteries, enjoining rigorous meaſures againſt all ſuch clergymen, under their juriſdictions, as had preſumed to be preſent at ſuch a profane repreſentation †.

THE play itſelf, they moſt violently decried, as a blaſphemous production of immoral tendency, and furniſhing, by its cataſtrophe, an encouragement to ſuicide.

THE author, the Reverend John Home, miniſter at Athelſtonford, was cited to appear before his own preſbytery, at Haddington, on the 5th of April. He excuſed himſelf till the 1ſt of May, when he aſſured them he would attend. They allowed him the indulgence, with certification, that the preſbytery would proceed to judgment at the time appointed, without further delay, which they ordered to be intimated to Mr Home by letter.

* Mr White miniſter of Liberton, was ſuſpended from his paſtoral office, from January 12th to February 2d, the ſentence having been intimated from the pulpit, by Mr Warden, moderator of the preſbytery.

SCOTS MAG. VOL. xix. p. 47.

† See appendix, No. XVI.

ON the meeting of the preſbytery at Haddington, on the appointed day, Mr Home requeſted a further indulgence of a week. They referred the whole matter to the ſynod at Edinburgh, which was to meet on the 10th, and adjourned themſelves till the ſame day at Edinburgh, that Mr Home might have an opportunity of attending, if he thought proper. The preſbytery accordingly met, and Mr Home attended; but no minute was entered upon the buſineſs.

THE affair came before the ſynod at Edinburgh on the 12th, and was remitted to the preſbytery at Haddington for want of form. At this meeting Mr Home did not, for what reaſons we do not pretend to aſſign, think it adviſeable to appear. He preached his farewel ſermon at Athelſtonford, to his congregation there, on Sunday, June the 5th, when many of them were bathed in tears, and on Tueſday the 7th, gave in his demiſſion to the preſbytery of Haddington.

BUT, although the author of the performance in queſtion deigned not to appear finally to the ſummons of the preſbytery, upon

on his own account, he was not neglectful in defence of his friend. He attended in his place, as a member of the aſſembly, and ſupported the cauſe of his brother miniſter with great firmneſs. He declared, that if there was any fault, it lay not at the door of the defendant, but at his own, with whom the crime had originated: and concluded his obſervations in the words of the unfortunate Niſus.

" *Adſum qui feci; in me convertite ferrum,*
" *Tantum infelicem nimium dilexit amicum.*

VIR. ÆN. L. IX. V. 427.

" Me, me, he cried, turn all your rage alone
" On me; the fact confeſs'd, the fault my own;
" His only crime (if friendſhip could offend)
" Is too much love for his unhappy friend."

DRYDEN.

THESE lines, ſo applicable to the ſituation of the ſpeaker, thus pleading in defence of a ſuffering aſſociate in his own cauſe, made a ſenſible impreſſion upon ſome of the judges, and, in all probability, mitigated the ſentence againſt Mr Carlyle*, the only one, except the author,

* "The ſynod does by this ſentence declare their high diſpleaſure with Mr Carlyle, for the ſtep he has taken in going

author, they ſeem moſt ſtrenuouſly to have purſued; whoſe puniſhment, had it not been for Mr Hume's interference, might poſſibly have proved more ſevere than a reprimand from the preſbytery, and a confeſſion of contrition and penitence from himſelf.

BEFORE the concluſion of the year (1757), Mr Sheridan, then manager of the Dublin Theatre, and father to the preſent Mr Sheridan, ſent over to Mr Home, in London, a gold medal, of ten guineas value, with an inſcription, acknowledging his ſingular merit in having enriched the Engliſh Stage with the tragedy of *Douglas*.

THE preſbytery of Glaſgow coincided with that of Edinburgh, lamenting the melancholy fact

to the Theatre; and ſtrictly injoin him to abſtain therefrom in time coming."

Mr Carlyle ſaid, "he received the admonition and injunction of the ſynod with reſpect. He was ſorry for the offence he had given; and hoped he ſhould never give the ſynod, or any other judicature of the church, occaſion to call him before them again for ſuch a piece of conduct."

Scots Mag. Vol. xix. p. 218.

fact that there ſhould have been a tragedy written by a miniſter of the church of Scotland; and repeating the erroneous aſſertion in the *exhortation* of the preſbytery of Edinburgh, that ſtage repreſentations had been condemned by the church in all ages *; recommending it to the General Aſſembly to enquire, whether a tragedy, called *Douglas*, written by a miniſter of the church of Scotland, had been "procured to be enacted" on the Canongate Theatre; whether or not, certain miniſters of the goſpel had been preſent at ſuch repreſentation; and praying them to give ſuch directions, as in their wiſdoms may be deemed neceſſary, "that ſuch miniſters, and all others, may be ſenſible, that the church of Scotland will never protect her members in a practice ſo unbecoming their character, and

* This aſſertion muſt have proceeded from miſinformation. It has already been ſhewn, that plays in modern Europe originated from the church, (page 4.) and ſeveral theatrical pieces had been compoſed by the members of it. Add to theſe; Buchanan wrote *Jeſtbus, ſive votum, tragedia*, and *Baptiſtes, ſive calumnia, tragedia*; beſides tranſlating the *Medea* and *Alceſtis* of Euripides, Milton wrote *Samſon Agoniſtes*, and *Comus*, a maſk; and the General Aſſembly of the church of Scotland expreſsly admitted of theatri-

and of ſuch pernicious tendency to the great intereſts of *religion, induſtry, and virtue* *.

By this overſtrained exertion of authority, the paſtors being expelled from forbidden ground, their flocks, excited by the impulſe of curioſity, were induced to overlook, and at length, overleap the pale, where they brouſed through interdicted lawns, upon before untaſted ſhoots, indulging in a novelty that infuſed a mingled gratification of rationality, information, and pleaſure.

An author, on the ſame ſubject, writes, "The public attention leading people to conſult

cal exhibitions, provided the ſubject was not ſcriptural. *Book of Univerſal Kirk, p.* 145, 161.

The tragedy of *Douglas* could not be claſſed under this deſcription. St Paul, after his converſion, and conſequently while a profeſſor of Chriſtianity, quotes a paſſage from a Grecian poet; "For in him we live, and move, and have our being;" *as certain alſo of your own poets have ſaid,* "For we are alſo his offſpring," Acts xvi. 28. which ſhews his reſpect for poetry, and the opinion in which he held it. Nay, he inſerted in the ſacred text, ſuch were his ideas of ſtage compoſitions, a verſe from a play (the Thais of Menander) which ſtill exiſts, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners," 1 Cor. xv. 33.

* See appendix, No. XVII.

ſult their own reaſon, in a good manner diſſipated the prejudices which had hitherto ſubſiſted againſt the ſtage." Thus, a ſtriking leſſon was afforded, "that extravagant and unſucceſsful attempts to enſlave the minds of men, muſt be productive of increaſing liberality of ſentiment*."

THE ſame newſpaper, the Edinburgh Courant, which contained the fulminations of the preſbytery againſt the performance of *Douglas*, advertiſed the repeated repreſentation of the play, *with material alterations by the author*. It ſtill kept its ground, has continued to be acted in every Theatre in the three kingdoms; and Mr Home, the author, is looked up to with the higheſt reſpect.

To enter into a particular deſcription of the merits or defects of this piece, would be ſtepping out of our way. But as it wears ſo ſtrong a feature in the work in which we are embarked, we cannot avoid at leaſt noticing the official and marked objections to it, as thrown out by its oppoſers at the time.

IN the courſe of the proceedings againſt

* Arnot's Hiſtory of Edinburgh, p. 378.

the author, and other miniſters *, who attended the repreſentation, it appeared in proof, by depoſitions laid before the preſbytery, that a player, in the character of the *Shepherd*, ſwore *by him that died on the accurſed tree* †; that another, in that of *Glenalvon*, ſaid,

" No prieſt! No prieſt! I'll riſk eternal fire!"

and that a third, in that of *Lady Barnard*, or *Lady Randolph* ‡, kneeled down, and put up ſome prayers.

WHETHER the above paſſages were, or were not, improperly introduced by Mr Home, is, and indeed, was at the time needleſs to diſcuſs, as they were ſuppreſſed by the author, no doubt, with the aſſent of his brethren, after the firſt night's performance, and never appeared in print.

THE

* Meſſrs Carlyle of Invereſk, Home at Polwarth, Scot at Weſtruther, Dyſart at Eccles, Cupples at Swinton, Steel at Stair, and White of Liberton.

† " By him that died on the accurſed tree," was an expreſſion taken nearly *verbatim* from an old Engliſh ballad, called " Adam Bell Clym of the Clough."

See Reliques of Ancient Poetry.

‡ The name of *Lady Barnard*, heroine of the play, was changed to *Lady Randolph*, on its firſt repreſentation in London.

THE kneeling of *Lady Barnard*, ſince *Lady Randolph*, is an action, *ad libitem*, of the actreſs, and may be adopted or omitted, according to her judgment or feeling, on the occaſion. It is a part, however, of the mechaniſm of ſtage buſineſs, which has conſtantly been practiſed in a variety of ſcenes of agitation, rage, or diſtreſs, by our firſt actors, and was no doubt, ſo originally arranged by the monarch of the Britiſh drama. The queen of Henry the Sixth, when compelled to give up her children, that were afterwards murdered by the Uſurper, cries,

" ——— To heav'n I leave 'em!
" Hear me, ye guardian powers of innocence!
" Awake or ſleeping, oh, protect 'em ſtill*."

THE Ducheſs of York, throwing herſelf upon her knees, alſo before *Richard*, exclaims,

" Then hear me, heav'n! and heav'n, at his laſt hour,
" Be deaf to him, as he is now to me*."

AND on the repeating the following lines, containing one of the grand articles of the church's cenſure, by the *Lady Randolphs* I have ſeen,

" O! thou

* Richard III. Act 4.

"O! thou all righteous and eternal king!
"Who father of the fatherleſs art call'd,
"Protect my ſon—Thy inſpiration, Lord!
"Hath fill'd his boſom with that ſacred fire,
"Which in the breaſts of his forefathers burn'd:
"Set him on high like them, that he may ſhine
"The ſtar and glory of his native land:
"Then let the miniſter of death deſcend,
"And bear my willing ſpirit to its place"—

The ſtillneſs of the houſe, the ſolemneſs of the appeal, the ſupplicating attitude of the imploring matron, with declining head, extended arms, and uplifted eyes, could not fail to infuſe into the breaſts of the ſurrounding auditors, the mixed effuſions of benignity, and devotional ſenſations, the natural impulſe of ſo ſublime a ſcene.

It was objected by its reverend oppoſers, that its plot had an immoral tendency, and that its cataſtrophe promoted the crime of ſuicide. In my humble opinion, in both theſe points of view, it furniſhes principles the very reverſe. The only fault we find imputable to *Lady Randolph*, was the "taking an oath equivocal." She ſwore not to commit what ſhe had already *committed*. She

was

was married to *Douglas*, when her father "queſtioned her," *Lady Randolph* confeſſes,

"——————— Alone, forſaken, faint,
"Kneeling beneath his ſword, fault'ring I took
"An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
"Wed one of *Douglas'* name. Sincerity,
"Thou firſt of virtues, let no mortal leave
"Thy onward path! although the earth ſhould gape,
"And from the gulph of hell deſtruction cry,
"To take diſſimulation's winding way."

FROM a conſcious remorſe of her duplicity of conduct to a parent, ſhe naturally breaks out into this ſhort inference,

"——————— This moral learn,
"This precious moral, from my tragic tale."

IN conſequence of her firſt fatal ſecret, her huſband having fallen in battle, ſhe was compelled to follow it up with another, that of the birth of her ſon; who, though miraculouſly ſaved from the flood, was ſuffered, from that *fatal ſecret* of being unknown, to fall by the machinations of a villain.

WHEREAS, had her conduct been fair, filial, and open, her ſon might have been acknowledged;

ledged; he might have lived and flouriſhed at the head of his illuſtrious line, the protecting guardian of his kindred and his name.

THAT the tragedy held out in its concluſion, a pernicious tendency to ſelf-ſlaughter, we look upon, from the foregoing reaſons, to be equally ill founded. The act of ſuicide, even upon heathen principles, cannot be juſtified. The voluntary reſignation of life by Cato, though a patriot and a Roman, has its oppoſers as well as its defenders, and continues to this day, an undecided ſubject in the ſcholaſtic themes. But in a Chriſtian, the abetting its principles muſt be adjudged a crime of the blackeſt die. On this ſubject, I have before decidedly expreſſed myſelf. *Eldred*, in the tragedy of that name, in endeavouring to diſſuade his daughter-in-law from her reſolves upon ſelf-deſtruction, decries the deed as,

" ——————— A foul attack
" On heav'ns prerogative; a theft againſt
" The Moſt Supreme, which ſorely would inthral thee—
" Life for a life is human forfeiture;
" But he who robs the gods of his own being,
" Though he evade his miſeries on earth,
" To keener pains muſt be conſign'd hereafter."—

ELDRED, Act IV. p. 3.

THE

THE guilt of ſuicide being admitted, let us ſee how far the author of *Douglas* falls under the cenſure as an abettor of the crime.

Lady Randolph, as before obſerved, by her deception and diſobedience to a parent, had been reduced to the deplorable ſituation in which ſhe leaves us in the laſt ſcene of the play; we are afterwards informed,

" She ran, ſhe flew like lightning up the hill,
" Nor halted till the precipice ſhe gain'd,
" Beneath whoſe low'ring top the river falls,
" Ingulph'd in rifted rocks: thither ſhe came,
" As fearleſs as the eagle lights upon it:
" *Oh! had you ſeen her laſt deſpairing look!*
" Upon the brink ſhe ſtood, and caſt her eyes
" Down on the deep: then lifting up her head
" And her white hands to heav'n, ſeeming to ſay,
" Why am I forc'd to this? ſhe plunged herſelf
" Into the empty air." ———

THUS periſhed, in a fit of deſperation, a wretched mortal, reduced, by her own miſconduct, to the utmoſt pitch of human miſery.

Is the circumſtance out of nature or uncommon? We hear of ſuch melancholy truths daily.

daily. Is the author culpable for inſerting ſo natural a circumſtance? As well may we accuſe the holy writ of encouraging ſuicide, by recording the death of Saul*.

I HAVE in a former publication obſerved, that, "perhaps the reaſon why ſo many tragedies are concluded unhappily, is the difficulty of ſaving the principal character with propriety. The bowl and dagger, as Dryden obſerves, are always ready to relieve an author, when he is at a loſs to complete his cataſtrophe.

"MANY ſubjects, hiſtoric facts eſpecially, will not admit of a fortunate concluſion. But I ſtill contend, that where a writer has it in his power, and can bring it about with propriety, it muſt give a greater degree of ſatisfaction,

* "Then ſaid Saul unto his armour-bearer, draw thy ſword, and thruſt me through therewith, leſt theſe uncircumciſed come and thruſt me through, and abuſe me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was ſore afraid: therefore Saul took a ſword and fell upon it.

"And when his armour-bearer ſaw that Saul was dead, he fell likewiſe upon his ſword, and died with him." 1 Samuel xxxi. 4, 5.

ſatisfaction, to ſee an oppreſſed or diſtreſſed hero rewarded for his virtues, than to behold innocence fall a victim to the machinations of villainy*."

It would not perhaps have been an eaſy matter for the critic to point out the mode of contriving a happy termination to the tragedy of *Douglas*, without a much greater violation of the rules of poetical juſtice, than had been objected to by the learned divines. Had *Douglas*, with his youthful agility and fire, been permitted to have eſcaped the aſſaſſin's ſtab, and the play had finiſhed with the exaltation of *Douglas*, and the happineſs of *Lady Randolph*, it muſt have proved a bad leſſon to female youth, by diſcouraging the practice of "*ſincerity, the firſt of virtues*," in their tranſactions with a parent.

It would likewiſe have deprived the audience of thoſe ſympathiſing ſenſations of ſorrow attendant upon ſcenes of diſtreſs, and the author, of preſenting the world with one of the beſt ſhort epilogues we ever remember to have heard; in which he obſerves,

* Preface to Eldred.

" _____ That pity is the beſt,
" The nobleſt paſſion in the human breaſt;
" For when its ſacred ſtreams the heart o'erflow,
" In guſhes pleaſure with the tide of wo;
" And when the waves retire, like thoſe of Nile,
" They leave behind them ſuch a golden ſoil,
" That there the virtues without culture grow,
" Here the ſweet bloſſoms of affection blow."

THE play, it muſt be obſerved, with all its imperfections on its head, and the oppoſition formed againſt it, which did not perhaps operate much in its diſfavour, was received by all ranks of people with the ſtrongeſt marks of applauſe, and repeatedly performed ſeveral ſucceeding nights; its *run*, to make uſe of a ſtage phraſe, being unprecedented in that era; and while a reliſh for theatrical entertainments ſhall pervade the taſte of a Britiſh audience, the tragedy of *Douglas* ſhall remain a ſtanding diſh at the dramatic feaſt.

SECT. XVIII.

Effects of the tragedy of Douglas upon the author's purſuits—Its original caſt in Covent Garden—Mrs Woffington—As an actreſs—Her figure—Anecdote of Mr Holland in Hamlet—Mr and Mrs Yates—The author's introduction to Mr Garrick.

My theatrical purſuits, at an early period of life, embibed an energy, if not their origin, from a repreſentation of the tragedy of *Douglas*; and my future career, through the various ſtage gradations, was connected with, and greatly affected by it.

This play was among the earlieſt of thoſe dramatic exhibitions I beheld on my arrival in London. It was on the firſt night of its performance. I was moſt forcibly ſtruck with Mr Barry in the *Young Hero*. I muſt indeed have been devoid of every ſpark of ſenſation, if I had ſat an unaffected ſpectator. Whoever had an opportunity of beholding that celebrated actor in the zenith of his the-

atrical powers, cannot poſſibly have forgot the wonderful effects of his faſcinating faculties. My ideas were not, however, confined to the ſenſations of pleaſure I enjoyed from beholding the performance, I envied the applauſe of the actor. Having performed *George Barnwell* while at ſchool, with ſome degree of approbation, I deemed myſelf not unequal to the taſk; and to have been permitted to enact *Young Norval*, with the mother I beheld, would, at that inſtant, have been the fulleſt gratification of my wiſh.

THE play was ſuperbly and fancifully dreſſed, but without the leaſt badge of national diſtinction. Mrs Woffington was the *Lady Randolph**; who looked and moved the character ſhe repreſented moſt divinely: a peculiar tone, with ſome degree of harſhneſs in the voice, was her only drawback from perfection. It yet remained for the vaſt excellence

* Caſt of the tragedy of *Douglas*, when firſt brought out at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, March 14. 1757.

Douglas, — — Barry;
Glenalven, — — Smith;
Lord Randolph, — — Ridout;
Old Norval, — — Sparks;
Lady Randolph, — — Woffington:

I inſert this from memory, but I think it is correct.

cellence of Mrs Barry, who afterwards performed the part upon the ſame ſtage, to come up to the ideas of the audience in that unrivalled character; to repreſent, in apparent reality, the figure, voice, and feelings of the ſuppoſed *Lady Randolph*, and to place the tragedy of *Douglas* in the firſt ſtation of dramatic compoſitions.

MRS WOFFINGTON was at one period the favourite of Mr Garrick*, in whoſe praiſe he compoſed the ſong of LOVELY PEGGY, which in my remembrance was generally ſung, and exceedingly popular; beginning with this ſtanza,

"Once more I'll tune the vocal ſhell,
"O'er hills and dales my paſſion tell;
"A flame which time can never quell,
"That burns for thee, my Peggy."

WITH a tall, and completely formed figure, nature had beſtowed upon her a moſt beautiful

* Mrs Margaret Woffington was a native of Dublin, born in 1718. Mr Garrick's acquaintance commenced with her on his firſt viſit to that city in 1742, when ſhe performed *Cordelia* and *Ophelia*, to his *Lear* and *Hamlet*. She appeared in London for the firſt time, A. D. 1738, in the character of *Sir Harry Wildair*.

ful face; to which grace and highly finiſhed accompliſhments had been added, by her attention to, and a familiarity with high life. Her line of acting was *Lady Townly*, *Lady Betty Modiſh*, *Clarinda*, &c. &c. in which ſhe was the Mrs Abington of the age.

I SPEAK this from report only, as beſides *Lady Randolph* repeatedly, I only ſaw her in *Sir Harry Wildair* and *Lothario*, as ſhe was taken ſuddenly ill before the cloſe of the ſeaſon*, in reciting the epilogue to *As You Like It*, being obliged to leave it unfiniſhed, and never afterwards appeared upon the ſtage. She ſurvived the ſhock ſome time, and expired of a gradual decay, in the prime of life, having ſcarcely attained her forty-fourth year.

SHE was, when very young, a pupil of Madame Violante's, the French poſture-miſtreſs, already mentioned as managereſs in Carrubers Cloſe. From her ſhe was inſtructed in the rudiments of eaſy action and graceful deportment, which, when an adult, ſhe

* May 17. 1757.

ſhe unremittingly endeavoured to improve, having made a viſit to Paris for that purpoſe. There ſhe was introduced to Mademoiſelle Dumeſnil, an actreſs celebrated for her elocution and elegance of action.

Mrs Woffington had the advantage of an early initiation upon the Theatre*; and afterwards availed herſelf of Colley Cibber's inſtruction; in which, however, ſhe embibed ſomewhat of the maxim of the *old ſchool*, where nature, and feeling were frequently ſacrificed to a pompous monotony.

Her figure in mens cloaths was without compare. She continued the unrivalled *ſtock Sir Harry Wildair* for ſome years; which ſhe never performed without great popular attraction. It was the opinion of the critics of the day, that when ſhe died, the play muſt

die

* When the *Beggar's Opera* was firſt acted at Dublin, it was ſo much applauded and admired, that all ranks of people flocked to ſee it. A company of children, under the title of *Lilliputians*, were encouraged to repreſent this favourite piece at the Theatre Royal; and Miſs Woffington, then in the *tenth* year of her age, made a very diſtinguiſhed figure among theſe pigmy comedians.

die with her; as ſuppoſing no one could be found equal to the part of *Sir Harry Wildair*, and even Garrick failed in the competition with her.

So much was this eminent actreſs at home in her male attire, that entering the green-room, after having received repeated burſts of applauſe from the audience, in one of the ſcenes of *Sir Harry*, and being elated with the particular ſucceſs of her efforts that evening, ſhe exultingly exclaimed, "I believe *one half* of the audience take me for a man." Mrs Clive, who was a great ſatyriſt; who, on the ſide of ſeverity, I have often witneſſed, ſeldom loſt a hit; and who was Mrs Woffington's profeſſed antagoniſt, gave her this, at that time, well known retort, "Oh, never be uneaſy at that, Madam, for the *other half* know to the contrary."

It was a cuſtom, at the time I am now treating of, at particular benefits, to erect an amphitheatre acroſs the ſtage, from one front wing to the other, with rows of benches, more or leſs in number, as occaſion required, which not only deſtroyed the effect, but greatly

greatly incommoded the buſineſs of the performance. In ſome inſtances, I have ſeen the ſeats of theſe temporary edifices riſe one above another, higher than the trees, and hats and bonnets were beheld faſtened to the clouds. A ſingle entrance was left upon each ſide next the ſtage door, which was often choaked up with by-ſtanders, and the feats of Boſworth-field, amidſt drums, trumpets, battle-axes, and ſpears, were enacted between two audiences, where *Richard* ſpoke his tent ſoliloquy, and his dying lines, upon a carpet no bigger than a table-cloth.

THESE inconveniences never failed to give diſguſt to thoſe who came with an intention to be amuſed, and could yield pleaſure to none but the actor, for whoſe benefit they were tolerated, and thoſe particular friends who aſſembled ſolely to ſerve him. Bickerings frequently aroſe at the commencement of the play, between the audiences before and behind the curtain; thence, upon other leſs attractive performances, aroſe the practice of inſerting at the bottom of the advertiſements and play-bills—N. B. *There will be no building on the ſtage.*

On one of these evenings, when admittance was allowed at the stage door, and Mrs Woffington was advertised for *Lothario*, curious to gain *a peep behind the curtain*, and to be favoured with a nearer view of the Actress, who had so forcibly attracted my attention in *Lady Randolph*, I obtained, what I then deemed a most enviable situation, the liberty of ranging at large behind the scenes, of conversing with some of the performers, to whom I had previously found the means of procuring an introduction, and of *making my bow* to Mrs Woffington, who, I was convinced, and I have not found occasion to change my opinion, in the *tout ensemble* as a male representer, had not then, nor has not yet been equalled.

In speaking of temporary stage buildings, I am forcibly impelled to mention a circumstance which I was an eye-witness of, and which I have heard very erroneously related. Mr Holland fixed upon the tragedy of *Hamlet* for his first benefit. I was acquainted with him previous to his *entre* upon the stage. He was clerk to a merchant in Barbican, and born at Chiswick, in the neighbourhood

neighbourhood of London, where his father then reſided. When the night came, his friends attended, and his native village was left almoſt literally empty. Among the reſt of his viſiting acquaintance, was a country girl, ſeated at the weſt end of the amphitheatre, where ſhe had an eaſy egreſs.

On the appearance of the *Ghoſt*, by the uſual ſtage trick, *Young Hamlet's* hat flew off, and lay nearly at the damſel's feet. She pitying the ſituation of her young friend, gently ſteals from her ſeat, takes up the hat, and places it upon Mr Holland's head, with the broad corner foremoſt, as is generally worn by a drunken man. She regains her ſeat with apparent exultation for the friendly feat ſhe had performed, in defending the young prince from ſuch a "nipping and an eager air," as he had juſt been ſhivering under; and *Hamlet* proceeded to finiſh the ſcene, unconſcious of the ridiculous figure in which he was placed. The audience, unwilling to break in upon the ſolemnity of the performance, bit their lips, and with difficulty reſtrained their riſibility, till the *Ghoſt* and *Hamlet* were fairly off the ſtage, when they

indulged themſelves in one of the loudeſt laughs I ever heard in a Theatre.

On Mr Garrick's arrival from Italy, among other improvements, ſuch as adopting foot lights, inſtead of circular chandeliers over head, *&c. &c.* he removed the above grievance, by augmenting the front of the houſe, ſo as to hold numbers equivalent to thoſe formerly admitted upon the ſtage building; by which means the performers could ſuffer no pecuniary diminution on their nights, and conſequently, had no cauſe to complain of an infringement, either of priviledge or property.

But, to return to the *Lady Randolph* of Mrs Woffington—I was ſo captivated with the ſcenes between the mother and the ſon, that the paſſion for the ſtage, with which I had before been poſſeſſed, was thereby the more heightened; and I reſolved, with a ſtronger propenſity for the profeſſion, that the part of *Young Norval* ſhould be my opening character.

With

WITH this determination, at my leiſure hours, I prepared myſelf in the words of the part, and took other meaſures to attain my purpoſe. I made an acquaintance with Mr Yates of Drury-Lane Theatre. He took for his ſecond wife Mrs Graham, who had then only ſhewn ſome faint glimmerings of that dramatic excellence which afterwards ſo conſpicuouſly ſhone forth; and which is ſo well remembered by the theatrical frequenters of this city*.

MRS YATES was at that time retained by the managers of Drury-Lane, as a ſubſtitute for Mrs Cibber, and was in waiting for her decline. I obtained permiſſion to rehearſe the ſcenes of *Douglas*, with her *Lady Randolph*, in her own houſe, where ſhe aſſured me ſhe was ſo well pleaſed with what ſhe had

* Mr and Mrs Yates were in Edinburgh in Mr Digges' time, and again under my management, in 1785, when ſhe appeared during the ſeaſon in the following characters, ſome of which were more than once repeated:—*Ducheſs of Braganza*, *Lady Macbeth*, *Jane Shore*, *Portia*, in the Merchant of Venice, *Lady Townly*, *Medea*, *Zulima*, in the Prince of Tunis, and *Lady Randolph*.

had heard, that, if I wiſhed it, ſhe would recommend me to Mr Garrick. This procured me an introduction to the Engliſh *Roſcius*.

I WAS uſhered into the preſence of the Little-Great theatrical potentate, by his brother, George Garrick; and after a few queſtions and replies on the ſubject, I recited to him the introductory narrative of *Young Norval*, with ſome of the ſpirited paſſages in the fourth and fifth acts.

"If I Were chain'd unarm'd, and bedrid old—"

"The blood of *Douglas* will protect itſelf."

I HAD approached the theatrical monarch with fear and trembling. His eye, more quick and penetrating than any I had ever encountered, was rivetted on mine; and whatever trifling powers nature might have beſtowed upon me, they were evidently lowered by apprehenſion; and I muſt have exhibited a confuſed and feeble effort.

WHATEVER

WHATEVER Mr Garrick's thoughts were at the time, he profeſſed to entertain no ſmall degree of hope. He had not the leaſt doubt, but with a little practice and experience, I might ſucceed; to what degree, till he ſaw me *upon the planks*, he could not pretend to ſay; but recommended it ſtrongly to me not to loſe ſight of the profeſſion; made ſome general obſervations upon acting, and adviſed me by all means to find out ſome country company, in order to habituate myſelf to the ſtage; a mode, he declared, he had himſelf adopted*, and which he ſhould invariably hold out to every novitiate.

MR GARRICK's advice I did not implicitly follow; for, although I felt its propriety, and was ſenſible, in my ſituation, of its ſalutary effects; yet could I by no means reliſh the humiliating ſituation in which for a time I muſt

* Mr Garrick's firſt attempt upon the ſtage, was at Ipſwich, under the feigned name of Lyddal, where he made his appearance in the character of *Aboan* during the ſummer 1741, and on the 19th of October the ſame year, performed *Richard the Third* at Goodmans Fields play-houſe.

muſt thereby have been placed; for notwithſtanding a favourite author had informed me, that

"Theſpis, inventor of the tragic art,
"Carried his vagrant players in a cart*—

It was not, at the time I am ſpeaking of, thought reputable, even by the members of the profeſſion themſelves, for an actor of any eſtimation to exhibit in a country town-hall, or

* *Dicitur et plauſtres vixiſſe poemata* Theſpis.
FRAN. HOR. v. IV. p. 245.

Note 276. *Vixiſſe poemata.*] Theſpis has the honour of inventing tragedy, becauſe he made ſome remarkable improvements in it. He firſt relieved the chorus, when fatigued with ſinging, with an actor, who recited the adventures of ſome illuſtrious perſon; and he afterwards added a ſecond player, and formed the dialogue. Theſe improvements are expreſſed by *canerent agerentque poemata*; one marks the chorus, which he found eſtabliſhed; the other means the actors, which he added. Ariſtotle tells us, that it was not known in his time by whom the maſk was invented. When tragedy had arrived at ſome degree of perfection, the poets began to cultivate comedy, which before lay neglected. But as they indulged to the moſt exceſſive licentiouſneſs, ſuch as expoſing the magiſtrates on the ſtage by their names, or by maſks painted like them, Lamachus made the *firſt* reformation among them, and Alexander the Great a ſecond. One gave birth to the middle comedy; the other to the new, in which the chorus was no longer allowed, *Turpiter obticuit.*

or a village barn; that practice was left for the principal performers of the preſent day to render faſhionable. I was not over fond, however ſtrong my inclination for the ſtage then was, of entering upon it in a ſubordinate light, or in any itinerant company.—The city of Edinburgh was pointed out to me on this occaſion as the capital of a kingdom, where a regular and reſpectable Theatre was eſtabliſhed: I determined, therefore, for the North. In conſequence of that reſolution, I ſome time after made a viſit to Mr Love, with whom I engaged myſelf *upon trial* for the Edinburgh ſeaſon, the reſult of which has been before recited.

SECT. XIX.

The deciding upon dramatic pieces or perſons embarraſſing to a manager—Conſequence of refuſals—Mr Garrick's general mode on thoſe occaſions—Effects of his indeciſions—Applications to Mr Foote—To Mr Rich—Anecdotes of the latter—As a manager, and machiniſt—As a Harlequin, by the name of Lun—Celebrated by Pope—His general character.

THE deciding upon the demerits of a theatrical candidate, or a new play, are the moſt unpleaſing, as well as the moſt perplexing offices in a manager's department.

IF a piece is ſent in for inſpection, without either probability, deſign, or connection, the moment a negative is given, the writer of it becomes the manager's profeſſed foe. He is either inſtantly denounced a moſt ſtupid blockhead, or, being a writer himſelf, is accuſed as a jealous purloining ſcribbler; and

conſequently unfit to fill the ſituation in which he is placed.

SHOULD a candidate for theatric fame apply for an introduction upon the ſtage, though he ſhould be deformed, have a defective, or indeed, no voice at all, with every imperfection you could point out, as I have often witneſſed, yet his refuſal will be certainly attended with a diſguſt towards, and an unalterable hatred to the manager for life. Thus, in either caſe, he unavoidably becomes the butt of pamphleteers, and newspaper ſquibs, or food for revilers in theatrical clubs. If any one, at thoſe nightly meetings, is louder than another in his railings againſt the manager, the odds are ten to one, that he is ſome diſappointed author, or a wou'd-be actor.

A BEAR will not attempt to fly, or a crow to ſwim, but man, vain man! will aim at purſuits the moſt prepoſterouſly abſurd. A young man, of powerful connections, ſome years ago, having a ſtrong deſire for the ſtage, tho' nearly as deformed in perſon as my old ſchool acquaintance, Maſter Æſop, becauſe he had been refuſed by the managers of both houſes,

houſes, commenced their deadly and declared enemy; and conſequently became the moſt determined leader of oppoſition to every managerial meaſure.

MR FOOTE having procured a licence for opening the Hay-Market Theatre, and advertiſements having been inſerted in the newſpapers to that purport, a variety of applications were made to him for engagements. Among many others, a lady was introduced, not over young, but rather handſome, and of a genteel appearance. "*Pray, Madam,*" ſays Mr Foote, "*Are you for tragedy or comedy?*" No anſwer. "*Are you a veteran? or is it your firſt attempt?*" Not a word. "*Hum!* Are you married, Madam?" "*Pray, Sir,*" ſays the lady, turning one of her ears to him, "*Speak a little* LOUDER, FOR I AM DEAF." "*Why, zounds, then Madam, why did you forget your trumpet?*"

A FEW days after, a perſon of decent appearance requeſted he might have the honour of introducing a lady to him, in praiſe of whoſe abilities as an actreſs he was not a little laviſh; and particularly, as ſhe was not only

only excellent as to figure, and ſpeaking, but remarkably ſo as to ſinging, in which department, very few of the vocal line in London could bear a compariſon. Mr Foote, from the deſcription, naturally ſuppoſing he had met with a prize, appointed an immediate interview; the agent had no ſooner quitted the room, than he returns ſomewhat precipitately, addreſſing the manager with, "*Sir, —there is one thing—I beg your pardon—There is one thing, Sir, I had forgot to mention, and which you may poſſibly object to*—THE LADY IS A BLACK."—"*Oh! no matter,*" replied the humouriſt; "*we will introduce the Roman faſhion: the lady ſhall wear a* MASK."

RIDICULOUS as this circumſtance may appear to the reader, I can aſſure him that I had it from Mr Foote himſelf; and I had before accidentally ſeen the identical lady, as I was paſſing through Lancaſhire, in the part of *Polly*. I could not help obſerving to my friend in the pit, when *Macheath* addreſſed her with, "*Pretty Polly, ſay,*" that "it would have been more germain to the matter, had he changed the phraſe to SOOTY *Polly, ſay.*" I was informed, that a few nights before, ſhe had

had enacted *Juliet*, when doubtleſs her *Romeo* moſt feelingly recited,

"Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night,
"Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."

So little are we judges of ourſelves, and ſo blind to our natural defects, that the moſt glaring infirmities are deemed by us as trifling obſtacles, eaſy to be ſurmounted; and to refuſe an application, however abſurd, is in a manager the height of temerity. The Deaf Dowager, and the Wooly Blackmoor, would paſs their hours of ſcandal in depicting the ignorance and ill manners of Mr Foote, in refuſing to exhibit ſuch rare talents, in the characters of *Lady Betty Modiſh*, and *Roſſetta*.

Mr Garrick was very ſore on theſe occaſions, and often too much ſwayed by his fears; he was tremblingly alive to the very whiſper of a lampoon or a paſquinade. To ſcribble with ill-nature is more eaſily acquired than a fluency of elocution, or the gracefulneſs of action; and a condemned actor may very poſſibly prove a moſt ſevere critic.

An

AN author* on the ſame ſubject obſerves, "The man to whom Nature has denied the genius to compoſe a play or a farce, may have abilities to ſtrike out a very poignant ſatire. He who is an utter ſtranger to dramatic poetry, may ſting with an eſſay, wound with a paragraph, or bite with an epigram."

UNDER the impulſe of theſe conſiderations, our modern Roſcius was cautious, peculiarly complaiſant, and generally, unleſs from ſome emergency reduced to come to the point, undecided in his anſwers. Thus, by avoiding Scylla, he frequently riſked the dangers of Charybdis.

A CANDIDATE for the ſock or buſkin, he would diſmiſs with declarations to the following tendency:—"Upon my word, Sir, you have great merit—And your conception—I like that laſt ſpeech very well, exceedingly well indeed, Sir—Your voice too—I really think—But for this ſeaſon I can aſſure you I am quite full—Leave your addreſs with my brother

* Life of Garrick, V. I. p. 208.

brother George, and if any vacancy happens, you ſhall hear from him."

An author, on the return of his *refuſed play*, would be informed, that, "I do aſſure you, Sir, I read your play with a good deal of pleaſure—It is not deſtitute of merit—Some alteration in the arrangement of the ſcenes, and a few additions to the laſt act, to render the *denouement* a little more dramatic, which might be pointed out—And then I really think—Hey! Why now, brother George, is not that your opinion?—Hey! Do you think we might not riſk it?—— However, Sir, if it had all the merit in the world it would be impoſſible for me to make room for it at preſent, or even for one or two ſeaſons to come. At ſome future period, when I am relieved from the engagements I have made, I might perhaps find an opening; and, as I obſerved, Sir, with the alterations I could point out, I know not but your piece might merit a trial. I am ſorry I ſhould be ſo ſituated at preſent. But prior engagements, you know, muſt be kept. Good morning, Sir—John, ſhew the gentleman out."

Relieved from his viſitants, with all thoſe flouriſhes with which his nature was ſo plentifully furniſhed, he forbade his door to be opened to them again; leaving the reſult of his *half yea and half nay* declarations to the chapter of accidents.

In all probability, before the ſpecified period came round, from inclination, ſituation, or circumſtances, the parties were differently diſpoſed; and conſequently, peaceably and ſpeciouſly got rid of. But if either the one or the other happened to be poſſeſſed of perſeverance and fortitude, ſupported by any degree of perſonal intereſt*, the complaiſant expreſſions of the manager were conſtrued into a promiſe, which, after a variety of delays and excuſes, he was obliged to make good, and by that means, compromiſe with the claimant, at the expence of his judgement.

Not-

* "The recommendation, or rather impoſition of ſome great perſons, whom it was not prudence to diſoblige, ſometimes came in, with a high hand, to ſupport their pretenſions: and then *cout que cout* acted it muſt be! So when the ſhort life of this wonderful nothing was over, the actors were perhaps abuſed in a preface for obſtructing the ſucceſs of it, and the town publickly damn'd us for our private civility."

Cibber's Apology, p. 344.

NOTWITHSTANDING, however, Mr Garrick's vaſt abilities as an actor, and his merit as a writer, his opinion, with reſpect to the acceptance or rejection of new pieces, was not infallible.

THE *tragedy of* DOUGLAS, which I have already announced, according to my humble conception, as one of our firſt modern dramatic compoſitions, was rejected by him, as being too ſimple in its fable, and deſtitute of ſtage effect.

PERHAPS, as I have already experienced in one of the moſt momentous concerns of my life, he either never examined into its merits, or delegating the exerciſe of his ideas upon the ſubject implicitly to another, reſted his deciſion upon an erroneous report. Be that as it may, after Mr Garrick had been informed of the ſucceſs of the play at Edinburgh, and when he alſo underſtood that the author was in treaty to bring it out at Covent Garden, he offered to receive it at Drury Lane; but his propoſal was rejected; and he candidly confeſſed, through the remainder of his life, whenever the ſubject was

ſtarted, that no circumſtance in the courſe of his management gave him ſo much concern, as the recollection of his having rejected the tragedy of DOUGLAS.

MR RICH, regardleſs of conſequences, treated both authors and actors with a great degree of *non chalons*. The laconic correſpondence betwixt him and Mr Quin is well known. The latter, having taken offence at ſome of the manager's arrangements, or thinking himſelf ſlighted, by his ſilence at the commencement of the ſeaſon, in one of his conſequential and ſullen moods, wrote to Mr Rich, and had an inſtant reply. The two letters run *verbatim* thus :——

" I AM at Bath.

QUIN."

" YOU may ſtay there and be d—d.

RICH."

OF his treatment towards an author, I had a ſingular ſpecimen. I was at cards with him, one of the Miſs Rich's, and his friend Bencraft, one evening, when a gentleman was

was announced to be in the hall, and ſo importunate for a ſight of the manager, that he was ordered to be admitted.

Mr Rich's peculiar characteriſtics were, the taking a great deal of ſnuff; ſtroaking a tabby cat, which conſtantly attended him, and generally ſat upon his knee; and remembering no ones name.

Rich. Well, Miſter! What's your pleaſure?

Author. Sir, (*rather pettiſhly*) I left a manuſcript play with you, I believe three months ago. You aſſured me you would read it the firſt opportunity. I cannot help thinking the time long: I am, excuſe me, Sir, a little anxious about it; and called, as I have done often, to learn its fate.

Rich. Why, look you, *Miſter*, I have no leiſure juſt now to peruſe *manuſcripts*. When my pantomime is up*, I may get a look at them; there they lie—A whole regiment; opera, farce, and blank verſe—You ſhall get your turn. I ſuppoſe, Miſter, about the end of

* Mr Rich was then reviving the *Sorcerer*.

of next ſeaſon I may be able to give you my opinion.

Author. As that is the caſe, Sir, I beg you will return me the manuſcript; and I ſhall not again break in upon your repoſe, or thus unſeaſonably interrupt your amuſement.

Rich. Oh to be ſure, Miſter; I have no wiſh to retain it. Here, Thomas. Look into the drawer next the window, and give Mr What's-his-name his play—You will know your own, Miſter—How ſtands the game, Ben? Seven to five, and hearts trumps—There's the deuce—Come, Miſter, my partner, try what you can do.

Author. Sir, my play is not here.

Rich. Is it not?—Why then, Miſter, pick and chuſe—Turn them over again, and take which of them you like beſt—A thouſand to one but it may be better than yours, Miſter, and anſwer your purpoſe quite as well.

The author not having the ſame kindred affection for another's bantling as for his own,

own, diſreliſhed the change; and although he was promiſed his favourite production the next day, yet, refuſing to venture the offſpring of his brain, its firſt born too, in ſuch ſuſpicious company, it was at laſt procured, and the author withdrew, not without evident ſigns of diſappointment and chagrin.

A CANDIDATE for the buſkin, being deſired to repeat the celebrated ſoliloquy in *Hamlet*, began, *to*-be, or not *to*-be. Rich very gravely replied, "Toby may be a very good dog, Miſter, but Toby will not do for me. You need not therefore trouble yourſelf any farther, Miſter."

A CIRCUMSTANCE, not very diſſimilar to this, happened lately to myſelf. A ſtudent from the Weſt of Scotland wiſhed to perform on this ſtage the part of *Douglas*; I deſired him to repeat any paſſage of it he pleaſed. Without heſitation he began,

"My name is *Norval* on the *Grampian* HILLS."

I requeſted to know what his name was elſewhere? He was ſilent as to the queſtion, but replied, "Though I am not ſo well verſed in

ſtage

ſtage buſineſs, no one underſtands the author better, as I have ſtudied him thoroughly.

A NOVITIATE, offering himſelf as a candidate for the buſkin, when I happened to be preſent, requeſted to go through the ſcene of *Othello* before the Senate. On being queſtioned by the manager, whether or not he could ſing, he anſwered in the negative. "I am glad of it," replied Mr Rich; "It is a good ſign. I cannot ſing, and yet you are ſenſible, Miſter," addreſſing himſelf to me, "that no one underſtands an emphaſis better, or is more familiar with the propriety of expreſſion, the tones, dignity, and rounding of a ſentence. I would not give a farthing, Miſter, for a man that ſhall attempt tragedy, that can ſing."

"Moſt potent, grave, and reverend Seigniors,
"My very noble, and approv'd good maſters"—

"There never was one able to turn a tune that could ſpeak, except my friend Walker*: but

* Mr Walker ſtood unrivalled in *Bajazet* and *Hotſpur**. His countenance was manly and expreſſive, and his deportment and action gave a wonderful effect to tyrannic rage. He knew no more of muſic than barely ſinging in tune.

* Life of Garrick. V. I. p. 25.

but then I taught him. He learnt from me the tone, the pathos, and the denunciation of vengeance, on his parting with *Axalla*.

" _____ Sate my revenge.
" The Tartar is my *bane*; I *cannot bear* him;
" Still ſhall we hate, and with defiance deadly,
" Keep rage alive, till one be loſt for ever."

TAM. Act. III.

THERE is a lurking propenſity in the diſpoſition of man, that hankers after ſituations in his purſuits through life, which nature never meant him to fill. He is thereby goaded onward through the bent of his own miſtaken talents, and taught to aim at impoſſible attainments.

IN no ſituation is this maxim more ſtrongly evinced, than in the profeſſion of an actor.

His admired excellence, was in ſuiting the action to the airs: and according to Mr Rich's report, I have always formed to myſelf, in idea, ſuch an acting ſinger in the perſon of Walker, as when I beheld Mr Digges in the fulneſs of his powers. Walker's *Macbeath* was chiefly followed for the humour, eaſe and gaiety he aſſumed in the part, which, more than his voice or muſical talents, ſupported the *Beggars Opera* in its original run. The temporary pun upon this piece was, that it made *Rich* gay, and *Gay* rich. Miſs Fenton, afterwards Ducheſs of Bolton, was the *Polly*. Walker had an unfortunate turn for inebriety and diſſipation; and died in low circumſtances, in Ireland, about the year 1744.

The ſock and the buſkin are ſeldom worn with equal dignity and eaſe by the ſame perſon. There are ſuch a variety of natural and acquired requiſites neceſſary in the different walks of the ſtage, that equal perfection thro' the whole is rarely to be found in an individual; and we ſcarcely remember an inſtance, where performers, male or female, poſſeſſed an inferior talent in any one line, that they did not forcibly attach themſelves to that.

Mrs Cibber, the celebrated tragedian of the laſt ſchool, wiſhed to leſſen thoſe unrivaled powers, by obtruding herſelf upon the town in comic characters. Her firſt *Conſtantia*, and the *Widow Belmour*, undermined that fabric of excellence ſhe had reared a few nights before in *Juliet* and *Alicia**.

Mr Brown, ſo well remembered by the frequenters of the Theatre of Edinburgh, for his

"* This actreſs, whoſe tones of voice were ſo expreſſive of all the tender paſſions, and was by nature formed for tragic repreſentation, was unaccountably deſirous of acting characters of gaiety and humour, to which ſhe was an abſolute ſtranger; ſhe had no idea of comedy, but ſuch as implied a repreſentation of childiſh ſimplicity."

Life of Garrick, V. I. p. 187.

his inimitable performance of the *Copper Captain*, perſiſted in believing, to the day of his death, that tragedy was his *forte*; and choſe rather to perform his *Richard* and *Chamont* to thin houſes, than to exhibit, to crowded benches, his attractive comic talents, ſo juſtly applauded and admired in the comedy of *Rule a Wife*.

And Mr Rich, who gave birth to *Harlequin*, who was the firſt machiniſt of the age, and in which line he has not yet been equalled, would have preferred performing the part of *Cato*, with ſix people in the pit, to exhibiting in his natural caſt, to conſtant crowded and overflowing houſes; although he alone could partake of the profits.

More than once, upon entering his box in the corner, and beholding the houſe crowded to the repreſentations of Mr Barry and Miſs Noſſiter, have I heard him, in a low, but ſatirical tone, exclaim, "What, are you come? Much good may it do you—I envy not your taſte."

He had leſs cauſe to be ſolicitous for the ſucceſs of his actors, either in tragady or

comedy, as he had an inexhauſtable fund within himſelf of never-failing attraction; for from the firſt night of a new pantomime announced by him, he was certain of crowded houſes till the cloſe of the ſeaſon.

I HAVE been informed, that from the introduction of his *Harlequin Sorcerer* in 1717, to the magnificent ſpectacle of the Coronation in 1761, during the run of which he died, there was not one of his productions that did not ſucceed, having been performed at leaſt forty or fifty nights ſucceſſively. "Such a profuſion of fine cloaths were exhibited in the laſt mentioned ſhew, of velvet, ſilk, ſattin, lace, feathers, jewels, pearls, and a variety of ornaments, as had not been ſeen upon any ſtage. The ſcenery and muſic were correſpondent to the grandeur of the ceremony, which was diſplayed to crowded houſes for near two months together*."

MR RICH, diſtinguiſhed in the play-bills by the name of *Lun*, was the ſon of Mr Chriſtopher Rich, patentee of Drury Lane, who cultivated and encouraged ſinging and dancing

* Life of Garrick, V. I. p. 330.

dancing exotics, in preference to eſtabliſhed plays, the natural performances of a Theatre. In this, the ſon ſeemed to have inherited the attachments of the father, which perhaps were heightened by an ineffectual attempt in ſome principal tragedy characters. Diſappointed in that walk, he therefore had recourſe to the cultivation of the genius which was inherent to his nature.

He ſelected from the heathen fables, ſerious ſtories, ſuch as *Orpheus and Euridice*, *Perſeus and Andromeda*, and the *Rape of Proſerpine*, and mingling with them groteſque and riſible characters, compoſed that motley kind of entertainment, known by the name of Pantomime, in which he was eminently ſucceſsful, having a head to invent, with ſtrength and agility to execute changes and deceptions the moſt ſurpriſing, and almoſt incredible to a beholder, eſpecially at firſt ſight. And notwithſtanding the abſurdities and improbabilities with which they were made up, they never failed in their attractions; for, however the grave critic might rail at and ridicule them, he would not fail to renew his viſits to *laugh* at their fooleries; and altho' he con-

contemned the inconſiſtencies with which he was diverted, he laughed, he knew not why, but he did laugh, his thoughts were deluded, and the effects of merriment thus anſwered.

"FROM ſucceſs of the original attempt," ſays Cibber, "ſprung forth that ſucceſſion of monſtrous medleys, that have ſo long infeſted the ſtage, and which aroſe upon one another alternately at both houſes, outvying, in expence, like contending bribes on both ſides at an election, to ſecure a majority of the multitude. But ſo it is, truth may complain and merit murmur with what juſtice it may, the few will never be a match for the many, unleſs authority ſhould think fit to interpoſe, and put down their poetical drams, thoſe ginſhops of the ſtage, that intoxicate its auditors, and diſhonour their underſtandings, with a levity for which I want a name."

IF I am aſked, (after my condemning theſe fooleries myſelf) how I came to aſſent, or continue my ſhare of expence to them? I have no better excuſe for my error, than confeſſing it. I did it againſt my conſcience; and had not virtue enough to ſtarve by oppoſing a multitude,

a multitude, that would have been too hard for me*."

MR GARRICK, with all his attractive powers, found it neceſſary to call in the aid of pantomime: in one of them he introduced a ſpeaking *Harlequin*. In a prologue to it, he paid the following tribute to the memory of Rich, then lately deceaſed.

"When *Lun* appear'd, with matchleſs art and whim,
"He gave the pow'r of ſpeech to every limb;
"Tho' maſk'd and mute, convey'd his quick intent,
"And told in frolic geſtures all he meant.
"But now the motley coat, and ſword of wood,
"Require a tongue to make them underſtood†."

MR RICH'S executive faculties were in their wane before I went to London; I therefore never ſaw any of his public exhibitions; but I have frequently beheld him go through detatched ſcenes in his dining-room, and upon the lawn at Cowley; particularly his catching the butterfly, and the ſtatue ſcene; and on his laſt revival of the *Sorcerer*, I ſaw him practiſe the hatching of *Harlequin* by the heat of the ſun, in order to point out the buſineſs

* Cibber, c. 15. p. 300. † Prologue to *Harlequin's Invaſion*.

buſineſs to Miles, who, tho' moſt excellent in the line of dumb ſignificance, found it no eaſy matter to retain the leſſon he had taught him.

THIS certainly was a maſter-piece in dumb-ſhew. From the firſt chipping of the egg, his receiving motion, his feeling the ground, his ſtanding upright, to his quick *Harlequin* trip round the empty ſhell, through the whole progreſſion, every limb had its tongue, and every motion a voice, which "ſpoke with moſt miraculous organ," to the underſtandings and ſenſations of the obſervers.

IT was in a former repreſentation of this pantomime, that his name became eterniſed by Pope.

"Immortal Rich! how calm he ſits at eaſe,
"'Midſt ſnows of paper, and fierce hail of peaſe;
"And proud his Miſtreſs' orders to perform,
"Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the ſtorm.
"The foreſts dance, the rivers upward riſe,
"Whales ſport in woods, and dolphins in the ſkies;
"And laſt, to give the whole creation grace,
"Lo! one vaſt egg produces human race*."

AMIDST

* Remarks, ver. 261. *Immortal Rich!* Mr John Rich, maſter of the Theatre Royal in Covent-Garden, was the firſt that excelled this way. DUNCIAD, B. III. p. 172.

AMIDST Mr Rich's numerous admired excellencies in the pantomimical buſineſs, a cotemporary writer deſcribes "his taking leave of *Columbine* as moſt graceful and affecting. His conſummate ſkill in teaching others to expreſs the language of the mind by action, was evident from the great number of actors he produced to fill up the inferior parts of his mimic ſcenes. *Pantaloon*, *Pierrot*, the *Clown*, and all the other various characters, he formed himſelf; and to his inſtructions we owed a Hippiſley, a Nivelon, a La Guerre, an Arthur, and a Lalouſe; all excellent performers in theſe diverting mummeries."

AMONG a number of ſingularities, moſt commonly attendant upon great genius, and high ſpirits, he poſſeſſed a crowd of virtues, which ſuperabundantly over-balanced his harmleſs oddities. He was an affectionate huſband, and a tender father, juſt in all his dealings, loved conviviality, and a friend; and was charitable and humane. His acts of benevolence, and neighbourly kindneſs, are yet freſh in the memory of many of the families in the vicinity of Cowley and Uxbridge,

where his loſs was felt and regretted; and where a long liſt of penſioners were left behind him to lament his loſs.

SECT. XX.

Party prejudices—How they operated with reſpect to the performance of Douglas—Upon other productions of the ſame author—Riot in the Canongate Theatre, occaſioned by the ſong of Culloden—On the performance of High Life Below Stairs—Bad effects of admitting ſtrangers behind the ſcenes—Its cuſtom aboliſhed—Deciſion of the Lords, reſpecting diſturbances in the front of the houſe—In favour of the manager—Conſequences of thoſe regulations.

On my engagement in Drury-Lane, after my firſt ſeaſon in Edinburgh, the tragedy of *Douglas*, "*ſtill harping upon my daughter*," was the theme of my ſong, and *Young Norval*, of all others, the part I was fond of. I determined, therefore, upon that, as my opening character. I had provided for the purpoſe, before I left Edinburgh, a Highland dreſs, accoutered, *cap-a-pee*, with a broad ſword, ſhield and dirk, found upon the field of Culloden. But here, as uſual, freſh impediments aroſe. Lord Bute's adminiſtration,

from cauſes unneceſſary here to enter upon, was become ſo unpleaſing to the multitude, that any thing, confeſſedly Scotch, awakened the embers of diſſenſion, and fed the flame of party. Mr Garrick therefore put a direct negative, at once, upon my appearance in *Douglas*; and, as on a former occaſion, *Oroonoko* was ſubſtituted in its place; for even to have performed the play of *Douglas* would have been hazardous, and to have exhibited the Highland dreſs upon the ſtage, imprudence in the extreme. Could I have ſuppoſed at that period, that I ſhould live to ſee the tartan plaid univerſally worn in the politeſt circles, and its colours the predominating faſhion among all ranks of people in the metropolis?

To ſuch a height of prejudice were political diſcuſſions at that day carried, that when a tragedy, written by the author of *Douglas*, approved of by Mr Garrick, and upon the point of being brought forward, was underſtood to be the production of Mr Home, ſuch remonſtrances were made againſt it, merely from his being patronized by Lord Bute, as intimidated the manager from his purpoſe. The author was informed by Mr Garrick,

Garrick, that unleſs he altered the title of his play, and procured for it ſome adopted father, he could not poſſibly venture to bring it out. Mr Home immediately complied; he changed the name of the play from *Rivene*, the principal character, to that of the *Fatal Diſcovery*; and prevailed upon a friend, then a ſtudent in one of the univerſities, I believe, Cambridge, to profeſs himſelf the *author*, who, as ſuch, acquired the freedom of the Theatre Royal of Drury-Lane; and, I am informed, poſſeſſes it to this day.

THE play was performed, and univerſally well received; but either the real author, or ſome of his friends, being unable to keep the ſecret any longer, the truth came out, and after the twelfth night, Mr Garrick was threatened with having his houſe burnt down, if he did not immediately ſuſpend the performance of the play; an injunction, with which, however unreaſonable, he thought it adviſable to comply.

Mr ARNOT, in his remarks upon the theatrical occurrences of the city of Edinburgh, obſerves, that it will be neceſſary to take notice of certain incidents which had been

been omitted in the courſe of his narration. Theſe were, "*the riot of Culloden*, the diſturbance upon the farce of *High Life Below Stairs*, and the *tragedy of Douglas*."

THE laſt, we have already particularly dwelt upon; the preceeding ones are ſo minutely deſcribed, and we truſt with ſuch a diſtinct accuracy, that we ſhall tranſcribe the paſſages in the author's own words.

"AFTER the rebellion 1745, the divided ſpectators frequently diſplayed in the Theatre a ſpirit of political diſſenſion. Upon the anniverſary of the battle of Culloden 1749, this animoſity roſe to a height which threatened conſequences of a ſerious nature. Certain military gentlemen who were in the play-houſe, called out to the band of muſic to play *Culloden**. This was regarded by the audience as ungenerouſly and inſolently upbraiding the country with her misfortunes. Reſenting it accordingly, they ordered the band to play, *you're welcome Charles Stuart*†. The muſicians complying, inſtantly

* A tune compoſed in order to commemorate the battle fought near that place.

† A ſong in the oppoſite intereſt.

ly a number of officers attacked the orcheſtra with drawn ſwords, and leaped upon the ſtage. Among them was the ſon of a chieftain who had drawn the Pretender on to his raſh attempt, by offering to join him with his clan, and who, upon the Prince's landing, raiſed his clan, it is true; but, inſtead of fulfilling his engagements, joined the royal army. This young gentleman, leaping upon the ſtage, to diſplay the zealouſneſs of his loyalty, ſlipped his foot, and fell flat upon the ſtage. The ſpectators being tickled with the circumſtances, an immenſe peal of laughter burſt through the houſe, which exaſperated the indignation of the officers. Mean time, fiddle-ſticks being unable to cope with poliſhed ſteel, the muſicians fled; but the military were not long able to remain maſters of the field. They were aſſailed from the galleries with apples, ſnuff-boxes, broken forms, in ſhort, with every thing miſſile that could be laid hold of. The officers at once conſulted their ſafety, and went in queſt of revenge, by quitting the ſtage, in order to attack the galleries, which they ſtormed ſword in hand. The inhabitants of theſe upper regions defended themſelves from the

fury

fury of the ſoldiers, by barricading their doors. The Highland chairmen, learning the nature of the quarrel, with their poles attacked the officers in the rear, who, being neither able to advance nor retreat, were obliged to ſurrender at diſcretion, leaving the chairmen maſters of the field."

"LUCKILY no misfortune of any conſequence happened in this fray; and, to prevent ſimilar diſturbances, bills were next day poſted up, wherein it was notified in large rubricks, that, for the future, the band of muſic was not to play any tunes at the deſire of the audience, but ſelect pieces appointed by the managers."

"ABOUT twenty years ago, the practice of giving vails to ſervants univerſally prevailed through Scotland. Nothing can be conceived meaner, on the part of a maſter, than permitting his ſervants to be paid by others than himſelf; nothing more inhoſpitable towards gueſts, than ſuffering them, in a manner, to pay for their entertainment. Nothing can tend more to make ſervants rapacious, inſolent, and profligate, than allowing

ing them to diſplay their addreſs in extracting money from the viſitors of their lord; yet this cuſtom had crept in univerſally. Its bad effects had already been ſeverely felt, when an outrage of the footmen in the playhouſe diſplayed the evil in ſo ſtrong a light, as to occaſion its redreſs."

"ALTHOUGH it is the province of the ſtage to laſh the vices, and ridicule the follies of the people in all ranks; yet, ſoon after the farce of *High Life Below Stairs* was publiſhed, the footmen, taking it in high dudgeon, that a farce, reflecting on their fraternity ſhould be exhibited, reſolved that it ſhould be no more performed. Accordingly, upon the ſecond night of its being announced in the bills, as a part of the entertainment, Mr Love, one of the managers, came upon the ſtage, and read a letter, containing the moſt violent threatenings, both againſt the actors and the houſe, in caſe the piece ſhould be repreſented; declaring, that above ſeventy people had agreed to ſacrifice *fame, honour and profit* to prevent it. Notwithſtanding this fulmination, the performers were ordered to go on. That ſervants might not be kept in

the cold, nor induced to tipple in the adjacent ale-houſes, while they waited for their maſters, the humanity of the gentry had provided that the upper gallery ſhould afford *gratis* admiſſion to the ſervants of ſuch perſons as were attending the Theatre. Yet, did the only part of the ſpectators, which were admitted for nothing, preſume to forbid the entertainment of their maſters, becauſe it expoſed the vices of their own order. No ſooner was the piece begun, than a prodigious noiſe was heard from the footmens gallery: they were ordered to be ſilent, but ineffectually. Many of the gentlemen diſcovered, among this noiſy crew, their individual ſervants. When theſe would not ſubmit to authority, their maſters, aſſiſted by others in the houſe, went up to the gallery; and it was not till after a battle, and that the ſervants were fairly overpowered, and thruſt out of the houſe, that quietneſs could be reſtored."

"So daring an inſult made it not only neceſſary that the ſervants ſhould be deprived of the freedom of the play-houſe, which they had ſo groſsly abuſed, but that the practice

of

of giving vails, ſo pernicious to their morals, ſhould be aboliſhed. The gentlemen of the county of Aberdeen had the merit of being the firſt to make a reſolution neither to give, nor allow their ſervants to receive, any money from their viſitors, under the name of drink-money, card-money, &c.; and inſtead of it, to augment their wages. They were followed by the gentlemen of the county of Edinburgh, by the Faculty of Advocates, and other reſpectable public bodies; and the practice was utterly exploded over all Scotland*."

Two theatrical reformations took place during my management, which I cannot help deeming worthy of notice.

It had been a cuſtom, before the Theatre came into my hands, for gentlemen to procure admittance at the ſtage door, who moſt generally ſought it under the impulſe of inebriety. The green-room was conſequently open to a variety of viſitors; and the ladies dreſſing-rooms liable to the obtruſions of

* Hiſtory of Edinburgh, B. III. p. 374.

effrontery or deſign. The buſineſs of the actors was impeded, and the ſcenery interſperſed with objects viſibly actuated by intoxication, and, of courſe, at war with the two galleries, which interrupted the performance, and gave offence to the ſober part of the houſe. To theſe intruſions, I judged it neceſſary inſtantly to put a ſtop.

THIS cuſtom was prevalent in my memory at both houſes in London. Mr Garrick firſt threw it into ridicule, in the perſon of the *Fine Gentleman*, in his farce of *Lethe*, ſo happily hit off by Mr Woodward*; and afterwards with a ſtrong hand aboliſhed its exiſtence. I myſelf ſaw the ſtage door of Drury-

* "*Fine Gent.* I dreſs in the evening, and go generally behind the ſcenes of both play-houſes; not, you may imagine, to be diverted with the play, but to intrigue, and ſhew myſelf——I ſtand upon the ſtage—talk aloud—and ſtare about—which confounds the actors, and diſturbs the audience. Upon which the galleries, who hate the appearance of one of us, begin to *hiſs*, and cry *off*, *off*—While I undaunted ſtamp my foot ſo—loll with my ſhoulder thus—take ſnuff with my right hand, and ſmile ſcornfully—thus.—This exaſperates the ſavages, and they attack us with vollies of ſuck'd oranges and half-eaten pippins."—

LETHE, p. 18.

Drury-Lane, when I belonged to that houſe, ſhut againſt one of the firſt princes of the blood.

It was a practice alſo in Edinburgh, among a particular ſet of young men, through the deſire of fun, as they were pleaſed to term it, or the kicking up a duſt in the Theatre, to behave, on any trifling occaſion, in a riotous manner, to maltreat the door-keepers, if they dared to oppoſe them, and carry it off with impunity. One of theſe gentlemen, for wantonly ill-treating one of the ſervants of the houſe on his poſt, and in the exerciſe of his duty, was ſecured, and retained in cuſtody till he procured a perſon to be anſwerable for his appearance the following day. For this his apprehenſion and detainure, becauſe it had been put in execution without the aſſiſtance of a peace-officer, was I, as manager, proſecuted by the offending party for *falſe impriſonment*, as he thought proper to ſtile it, and a breach of *Magna Charta*.

The cauſe was tried, and finally given in my favour, by the Lords of Seſſion; when an injunction was delivered from the bench by the late Lord Preſident, "That whenever the

the ſmalleſt indication appeared of an intention to commit a riot within the walls of the Theatre, the door-keepers and ſervants of the houſe ſhould be inſtructed to apprehend the delinquent, and deliver him up to the guard. Becauſe, as had been contended for, and very juſtly obſerved, the audience might be thrown into confuſion, the groſſeſt irregularities committed, and the offender fled, before a town-officer, if not accidentally preſent, could poſſibly be procured."

THE aforeſaid grievances, by theſe means, were effectually ſuppreſſed. So ſenſible are the audience of the advantages derived from the ſcenes being kept clear, that, I am confident, if a ſtranger was now ſeen between the wings, they would not ſuffer the play to proceed till the object of their diſpleaſure ſhould be removed*. The ſervants at the doors

* This grievance cannot be better deſcribed than in the words of Colley Cibber. "Thoſe idle gentlemen," he ſays, "ſeemed more delighted to be pretty objects themſelves, than capable of any pleaſure from the play; who took their daily ſtands where they might beſt elbow the actor, and come in for their ſhare of the auditors attention. In many a laboured ſcene of the warmeſt humour, and of the moſt affecting paſſion, have I ſeen the beſt actors diſconcerted, while theſe buzzing muſquitos have been fluttering round their eyes

doors of the Theatre, by the before-mentioned decree, are enabled to maintain their poſts with a confident and reſpectful idea of the ſituation in which they are ſtationed, and the audience are permitted, without moleſtation, to enjoy thoſe amuſements for which they are met.

But although the removal of the firſt of theſe grievances yielded comfort to the performers behind the ſcenes, and the latter diffuſed ſtillneſs and quiet before the curtain, both the one and the other affixed a rooted diſlike againſt the manager, among a certain deſcription of men, whoſe favourite evening purſuits thoſe regulations had reſtrained. And I have good reaſons to ſuppoſe, from after conſequences, that the old adage of, "The remedy is worſe than the diſeaſe," may with

and ears. I have been the more copious upon this head, that it might be judged, how much it ſtood us upon to have got rid of thoſe improper ſpectators I have been ſpeaking off: for whatever regard we might draw by keeping them at a diſtance from our ſtage, I had obſerved, while they were admitted behind our ſcenes, we but too often ſhewed them the wrong ſide of our tapeſtry; and thus many a tollerable actor was the leſs valued, when it was known what ordinary ſtuff he was made of."

CIBBER, p. 342.

with reſpect to me, as manager, with too much propriety be applied. For I am ſorry to ſay, that on ſome occaſions I have experienced very unpleaſing effects from my having perſiſted to do my duty in the ſituation in which I was placed.

No man is without his faults, nor no manager without his enemies; ſome muſt conſequently have fallen to my lot; and the numbers of the latter were not diminiſhed by the regulations before ſtated. The beaus being denied their evenings lounge behind the curtain, and the bucks deprived of their noiſy freedoms in the front; they reviled the cauſe of their forced compliance with order and regularity, and their voices of courſe, in all other reſpects, ran counter to the meaſures of the manager. He was cenſured for accidents which were out of his power to prevent: He was blamed for things he had done, and condemned for things he had not done: for, right or wrong, with thoſe who were predetermined to be diſpleaſed, his arrangements muſt be exploded.

SECT. XXI.

Two companies at the ſame time in Edinburgh—Effects of two Theatres formerly in London—In Dublin—Liſts of the two companies in Edinburgh—Diſcuſſions before the Lords of Seſſion—Their interlocutors reſpecting the Theatre Royal—Mrs Billington there.

THE preſent ſeaſon, 1793, having commenced before I had it in my power to lay the foregoing ſheets before the public eye; and a circumſtance more momentous to myſelf, the Theatre, and the Public, than any thing that has formerly occurred in the dramatic line, having recently taken place, I think it neceſſary to comprize, at leaſt the out-lines of that event, within the limits of the preſent work.

MR KEMBLE, from the Dean of Faculty's decreet-arbitral upon the mutual miſſives of November 2. 1791, already inſerted, and explained*, preferred a claim to perform in the

* See page 202.

city of Edinburgh, independent of the Theatre Royal. With this intent, he takes the Circus, and advertiſes to open it as a Theatre, in direct violation of the laws of the land, and in contempt of the King's Royal Patent; under which the exiſting Theatre had continued to be opened for five and twenty years.

THE ſuppoſition of two Theatres exiſting in Edinburgh, even increaſed as it is in ſize, and the number of its inhabitants, cannot for a moment be entertained by thoſe who are the leaſt converſant in ſtage matters.

TWO play-houſes in the city of London, within the preſent century, were ruinous to each other. Cibber, on this head, makes the following declaration: "It may be worth the public obſervation, if any thing I have ſaid of it can be ſo, that *one* ſtage may, as I have proved it has done, very laudably ſupport itſelf, by ſuch ſpectacles only as are fit to delight a ſenſible people; but the equal proſperity of *two* ſtages has always been of a very ſhort duration *."

A THEATRICAL

* Colley Cibber, p. 274.

A THEATRICAL rivalſhip in my time, took place in Dublin. Moſſop in Smock-Alley, and Barry and Woodward, in a new Theatre in Crow-ſtreet, were the contending parties. The exertions of friends on each ſide, ſupported the rival houſes for a time; but the reſult of the oppoſition proved, in the end, the ruin of both. The legiſlature at length interfered, and the dramatic amuſements, by an act of parliament, were confined in that city to *one* Theatre.

THE preſent ſeaſon at the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh, commenced on Saturday, January the 12th, under the direction of Mrs Eſten, in conſequence of her leaſe for a year; Mr Williamſon having been appointed acting manager.

PERCY, *Earl of Northumberland*, and the muſical entertainment of the *Highland Reel*, were the opening pieces. Mrs Whitlock, an actreſs of eſtabliſhed merit, made her firſt appearance on that Stage, in the part of *Elwina*; and Mr Whitlock, late manager of the Theatre Royal of Newcaſtle, in *Earl Raby*.

THE following liſt at that period compoſed the company.

LIST

OF THE COMPANY AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, 1793.

Meſſrs Wilſon,	Mrs Whitlock,
Whitlock,	Nunns,
Chalmers,	Warrell,
Lamaſh,	Rowſon,
Scriven,	Charteris,
Nunns,	Bland,
Baker,	Baker,
Hallion,	G. Wilſon,
Bland,	Miſs Fontenelle,
Bland jun.	Harley,
Egan,	Hopkins,
Warrell,	Mrs Jackſon.
Meadows,	
Charteris,	
Charteris jun.	
Mountfort,	
Williamſon.	

Meſſrs Middleton, a principal tragedian, and Bowden, in the vocal line,
were engaged for a certain number of nights.

THOUGH

THOUGH Mr Kemble had removed from the Theatre Royal, at the expiration of his leaſe, it now appeared evident that he was determined to perſiſt in ſetting up a rival Theatre in Edinburgh, for which purpoſe he had agreed with the very numerous proprietors of the Circus, for a leaſe of that ſubject, as a proper place for carrying on the adventure, with a conſiderable party to ſupport him in the project. A proteſt, therefore, was immediately taken againſt Mr Kemble, intimating to him, that to act there for gain was equally againſt law, and againſt the rights of the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh, and that the truſtee for Mr Jackſon and the creditors, was diſpoſed to avail himſelf of all the powers the law might afford for repreſſing ſuch a meaſure.

MR KEMBLE, however, perſiſted in his purpoſe, and, about the middle of January, advertiſed that he was to open a Theatre upon the 21ſt. A bill of ſuſpenſion and interdict was forthwith prepared for the reſpondents, and preſented to Lord Swinton Ordinary upon the 19th, in order to prevent Mr Kemble's proceeding to execute his purpoſe.

A DE-

A DECLARATOR of truſt was alſo raiſed againſt the patentees, in order to have the patrimonial right in the patent aſcertained, and the executed ſummons was produced along with the bill. Mr Kemble, on the other hand, thought proper to preſent a bill of ſuſpenſion, praying for a prohibition againſt being troubled or moleſted by the reſpondents.

MEAN time, he prepared to follow up his advertiſements, with exhibiting thoſe theatrical performances he had ſo repeatedly announced. The alterations of the Circus were at length completed; the ſtage was brought forward into the area which had formerly been uſed for equeſtrian exerciſes, the remainder of that place forming the pit, which was incloſed with a ſemicircle of boxes. The whole was fitted up with conſiderable expence, in a ſhewy theatrical ſtile; and on the 21ſt of January the houſe was opened, under the name of the New Theatre, with the comedy of the *Rivals*, and the farce of *Peeping Tom*.

LIST

OF THE COMPANY AT THE CIRCUS, 1793.

Meſſrs Kemble,	Mrs Kemble,
Lee-Lewes,	Lee-Lewes,
Woods,	Woods,
Archer,	Rubery,
Swendall,	Walcot,
Fox,	Edwin,
C. Kemble,	Miſs Roſs,
Siddons jun.	Satchell,
Edwin,	
Bell,	
Sparks,	
Whitmore,	
Moreton,	
Clark,	
Rubery,	
Crew,	
Price,	

THE Lord Ordinary immediately heard counſel upon the bills of ſuſpenſion. The reſpondents produced the letter of Mr Dundas's ſecretary* ; but the Duke of Hamilton's original conſent having happened to be miſlaid, it was denied upon the part of Mr Kemble,

* Appendix, No. XXIII.

Kemble, that any ſuch conſent had been given, although his own agent was poſſeſſed at the time of the Duke's letter, ſignifying that his Grace had given the conſent in queſtion to Mrs Eſten*. In theſe circumſtances, the Lord Ordinary did not chuſe to grant an interim interdict, but took the cauſe to report, and ordered memorials. In the mean time, the Duke of Hamilton wrote the following letter to Mrs Bennet:

London, 21ſt January 1793.

"I HAVE conſented to Mrs Eſten's acting under the patent for the Edinburgh Theatre, in conſequence of the leaſe ſhe has obtained from Mr Jackſon's truſtees.

(Signed) "HAMILTON and BRANDON."

ON the other hand, the annexed letter from Mr Dundas was produced:

MY LORD, *Wimbledon, 22d January* 1793.

"I HAD determined to take no part in the preſent diſputes about the Edinburgh Theatre, and it is ſtill my wiſh not to do it; but if any advantage is taken of any *ſuppoſed* conſent given by the Duke of Hamilton, I authoriſe

* See Appendix, No. XXV.

thoriſe your Lordſhip, the Lord Provoſt, and the Dean of Faculty to act in my name, as you think moſt expedient for the general ſatisfaction and amuſement of the town of Edinburgh; and whatever you do, I ſhall approve of. And I am, &c.

(Signed) HENRY DUNDAS."

THE application upon which this letter was obtained, does not appear, nor upon what grounds the gentlemen mentioned in the above letter proceeded in exerciſing the diſcretionary power thereby committed to them. This much, however, is certain, that they did not follow out Mr Dundas's original intention, of hearing parties in the firſt place; for the reſpondents were not called before them, nor any enquiry made concerning the authenticity or date of the Duke of Hamilton's conſent, or notification thereof to Mr Dundas, nor into what had been done in reliance upon the verbal and written intimation from Mr Dundas, that he was not to interfere. In fact, as early as the 8th of September, Mr Kemble had the beſt of all evidence that the Duke's conſent was diſpoſed of; and if he concealed this circumſtance from Mr Dundas, in his after communications, he

certainly was guilty of an improper diſguiſe*. The following document, however, was forthwith communicated to the reſpondents.

"*Edinburgh*, 28*th January* 1793.

As authoriſed by the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, we hereby conſent to Mr Kemble acting under the patent for the Edinburgh Theatre. (Signed) RO. DUNDAS,
HENRY ERSKINE,
THOS. ELDER."

MEMORIALS were lodged upon the 29th January, and on the 6th of February, the following interlocutor was pronounced: "The "Lord Ordinary having conſidered this bill, "and memorials *hinc inde*, and heard parties "procurators fully thereon, and adviſed with "the Lords, paſſes the bill on caution, and "prohibits and diſcharges the within Stephen "Kemble, or any perſon acting under him, "from opening any Theatre for the perfor-"mance of plays, interludes, or other enter-"tainments of the ſtage, within the city of "Edinburgh, or ſuburbs thereof, or within "20 miles of the ſaid city, all in terms of the "ſtatute 10th of George II. *c.* 28."

MR

* See Appendix, No. XXIII. and XXIV.

Mr Kemble reclaimed, and the Lords appointed his petition to be anſwered on Thurſday, February 14th, which order was afterwards prorogated to Tueſday the 19th.

In the interim, a ſecond petition was put in by Mr Kemble, offering, on the interdict being ſuſpended, to conſign the profits of his houſe, to be afterwards diſpoſed of by Mr Solicitor, the *ſenior* counſel for the reſpondents; and this was followed with a minute, offering to refer to the ſame gentleman the terms of an arrangemnt for the winter. To theſe propoſals, Mrs Bennet and Mr Playfair conſented proviſionally, till Mrs Eſten could be heard from; and the Lords ſuperſeded adviſing the petition for a fortnight. Mr Solicitor forthwith directed the interdict to be ſuſpended in the mean time, and the profits of the New Theatre to be conſigned, ſubject to his diſpoſal. But Mrs Eſten having taken advice in England, upon the printed papers in the cauſe, which were tranſmitted to her, ſhe, agreeable to that advice, determined to rely on the judgment of the Lords, and directed her counſel to prepare anſwers accordingly.

THESE anſwers were ſubmitted in obedience to the appointment of the Lords; and on Thurſday, February the 26th, the cauſe was reheard, and the former interlocutor confirmed, which finally decided this important queſtion before the Lords. By this decreet the Theatre Royal was eſtabliſhed in its natural and ancient privileges, and once more opened with the fulneſs of its powers.

AT that particular juncture, the *amateurs* of harmony were regaled with thoſe delicious banquets, ſo richly and luxuriantly furniſhed by the inimitable talents of Mrs BILLINGTON. Her engaging mode of expreſſion, her wonderful execution, and her extenſive compaſs of voice, are not in the ſcope of language to deſcribe; they muſt be heard, and felt, before any adequate conception can be formed of her captivating powers.

SECT. XXII.

Supplementary obſervations—Upon the ſtage in general—Natural propenſity to dramatic repreſentations—Their eſtimation among the ancients—Origin of ſtage prejudices—Robin Hood's plays—Popular in Scotland—Diſturbances in Edinburgh attending their ſuppreſſion—Stage exhibitions vindicated—Their propriety—Their utility.

AMONG our various reſearches on the preſent ſubject, occurrences have ſtarted, and ſuggeſtions ariſen, ſubſequent to the formation of the early part of this work, which, however out of time or place, near as we are now drawing towards a finiſh, we cannot forbear holding up to the reader's view.

THE origin of the ſtage, and progreſs thro' its infancy, are nearly as inexplicable, and as much involved in darkneſs, as the organization of thoſe ſtates, in which the light of the drama exhibited its firſt dawn. Theatrical ideas,

ideas, and a ſtrong incentive towards their exhibition, ſeem to be inherent in man; which impregnate with his nature, and ſhew themſelves in a rude, or more poliſhed ſtate, as the people, by whom they are cheriſhed, make advances in the refinements of civilization.

THE ſavage Indian, before his naked audience, with brandiſhed *tomahawk*, enacts his recent bloody feats, and with expanding features, deſcribes the tortures of his proſtrate captive, expiring beneath the foot of the ſcalper.

THE Arcadean ſhepherds, with their hooks and oaten pipes, in alternate ſtanzas, chant out their rival ſtrains, in praiſe of coy, but lovely Daphne, while the liſtening ruſtics decide the conteſt, and preſent the bay.

THE learned, the enlightened, the accompliſhed auditor, feeds his dramatic impulſe upon the conjunct efforts of action and elocution, aided by the coſt and pageantry of dreſs, with the charms of ſcenic ſpectacle, or the notes of ſome ſyren's magic voice, accompanied by the enchanting ſounds of a full band;

band; and pays the admired exhibitor for the exertion of thoſe abilities which he envies and applauds.

Sir Richard Steel's accompliſhed man of faſhion ſays, "You ſmile to ſee me ſo complaiſant to one whom I *pay* for his viſit; now, I own, I think it not enough barely to pay thoſe whoſe talents are ſuperior to our own, (I mean ſuch talents as would become our condition if we had them). Methinks we ought to do ſomething more, than barely gratify them for what they do at our command, only becauſe their fortune is below us*."

The firſt attainment of ſtage method, we have any knowledge of, was among the Greeks. Had the whole of the works of Ariſtotle been extant, we ſhould have been favoured with a diſtinct account of the authors, actors, and performances, from the firſt formation of dialogue, to the time of that celebrated genius†.

Thespis

* *Conſcious Lovers*, p. 40.

† A book called Διδασκαλαι. The author, the famous Ariſtotle, flouriſhed in the time of Alexander the Great; he was preceptor to that great warrior.

THESPIS is generally allowed to have been the father of the ſtage. Æſchylus* foſtered and added to its improvements; and Sophocles† raiſed it to that height of perfection to which it arrived in that more poliſhed æra of thoſe enlightened ſtates. It is certain, however, that there were players long before Theſpis. This aſſertion we are enabled to make from the declaration of Plato. From Theſpis to Æſchylus, a ſpace of an hundred years, we know very little of the progreſs of the drama. Horace furniſhes us with the principal information.

"Poſt hunc perſonæ pallæque repertor honeſtæ
"Æſchylus et Modicis inſtravit pulpita tignis,
"Et docuit magnumque loqui, nitique cothurno."
A. POET. l. 178.

HOMER is ſtyled by Ariſtotle a compoſer of dramatic poetry‡; and by Herodotus and Strabo

* He writ ninety plays, of which ſix only remain. He was killed by the fall of a tortoiſe, which an eagle daſhed againſt his bald pate, miſtaking it for a ſtone.
VAL. MAX. 9. 12. PLIN. 10. 3.

† He wrote one hundred and twenty plays, whereof only ſeven remain. Lucan ſays he was choaked with a grape ſtone.

‡ μιμησεις δραματικας ἐποιει.

Strabo we are told, that the elder Phrinicus was ſucceſſor to Theſpis, and that there were plays* written by Epigenes and others†, all anterior to Æſchylus.

DRAMATIC compoſitions, and the writers and performers of them, were held in the higheſt eſtimation by the Grecian ſtates. If they formed no part of their religious ceremonies, they were, at leaſt, looked up to with a great degree of veneration.

PLATO cenſured Minos for making war againſt the Athenians, becauſe the numbers of tragic poets and writers of plays who reſided among them, would affix a ſtigma upon him and his family, which could never be erazed.

So inviolable were the funds that had been raiſed for the exhibition of their dramatic ſhews, that it required the ſkill and credit of a Demoſthenes, to broach, even a hint to the people, that the theatrical money ſhould

* μιμηθὰς δραματικὰς.

† Pratinas, Alcæus, Phrinicus, jun. Chærilus, Cephiſodorus, Appaltophanes.

be applied to the ſervice of the ſtate, by making uſe of it for carrying on the war.

"WAS it me, *O Athenians*, who ſaid that the money raiſed for the exhibition of our plays ſhould ever be laid out for the neceſſaries of the preſent war? No, no, Jove the Thunderer bear me witneſs, I would not ſo fatally incur the indignation of the people*."

IT is a circumſtance not the leaſt ſingular, in the courſe of human events, that a profeſſion ſo revered by the poliſhed Greeks, adopted by the accompliſhed Romans, cheriſhed by the members of the church in the Chriſtian æra, and now the favourite amuſement of the Britiſh iſlands, which form the moſt powerful and enlightened empire upon earth, ſhould have ſo ſunk in its dignity and eſtimation as a ſcience, at any intervening period, as to have had its members deemed outcaſts from ſociety, and in ſome parts of the world, not to have been allowed interment in conſecrated ground.

SOME

* Firſt Olynth.

Some legal reſtrictions were indeed laid upon the actors, even by the Romans, for which we have the authority of Horace and Tacitus; but theſe were levelled more againſt the profeſſors, than the profeſſion itſelf, which they highly venerated. The former of theſe authors informs us, that after tragedy had reached perfection, comedy ſucceeded.

"*Sed in vitium libertas excidit.*"

"And now the comic muſe again appear'd,
"Nor without pleaſure and applauſe was heard;
"But ſoon her freedom riſing to exceſs,
"The laws were forc'd her boldneſs to ſuppreſs;
"And when no longer licenc'd to defame,
"She ſinks to ſilence, with contempt and ſhame*."

In the reign of Francis the I. (1541), an accuſation was exhibited againſt a company of actors before the parliament of Paris, but that was not in conſequence of the unlawfulneſs or immorality of the profeſſion, but againſt the ignorance and inabilities of the performers. "Gen non littrez, ny entendus en telles affairs."

* Fran. Hor. v. IV. p. 247.

"THE common people, as they came back from theſe plays, would publicly and loudly mock the actors, and repeat the words the players had pronounced wrong; and the audience would ſay, in contempt of the performers, the Holy Ghoſt would not come down among them*."

WE muſt look towards a different quarter for the ſource of that inveteracy of prejudice formed againſt the profeſſion of the ſtage, formerly ſo prevalent, and which has not yet totally ceaſed to exiſt.

WITH the primitive fathers of the church, under the wing of whoſe brotherly order, dramatic compoſitions had been nurtured, the objections to their continuance, it is to be preſumed, originated. By them were laid the ground-work of reproach both againſt the frequenters and exhibitors of ſtage ſhews, then in

* Le commune peuple, retournant deſdits jeuſe ſe mocquoient, hautement, et publiquement par les ruës deſdits, jeux et des joüers coutra faiſant quelque langage impropre, qu'ils avoint ou y deſdits jeux, ou autre choſe mal faite oriant, par deriſion, que le S. Eſprit n'avoit point voulu deſcendere, et par d'autres mocquerois.

PARLIAMENT ROLLS.

in their infancy in modern Europe. Thoſe religious enthuſiaſts planted the whole church-artillery againſt every thing that bore the ſmalleſt reſemblance of Heathen worſhip.

STAGE ſubjects, deduced from ancient poets, founded upon Pagan mythology, were conſequently exploded as the groſſeſt abominations; the Joves and the Junos, Appollos and Venuses, let down between the cloudings in their celeſtial chariots, were execrated as mere emblems of idolatry.

THE cry againſt a profeſſion, in which are to be found the nobleſt lectures for the human underſtanding, and which, if properly conducted, muſt ever be acknowledged as the moſt rational amuſement for the relaxation of the mind; where inſtruction and pleaſure, the *utile dulci*, are interwoven, and may mutually be reaped, muſt have been raiſed from different motives, and from claſſes of men very oppoſite in their views.

THE well-meaning ignorant, and the deſigning intelligent paſtors, at once began the holloo; the one ſought to reform and direct, the

the other to miſlead and control. The former claſs, who through a conſcientious zeal, had carried their ſcruples, even ſo high, as to believe the having peruſed an epic poem in the days of their youth, an abomination before the Lord, pronounced all kinds of dialogue, and every ſpecies of ſpectacle, except thoſe of religious inſtitution, and within the walls of their cloyſters, as ſinful and profane. The latter, who ſought more ſtrongly to impreſs the truths of their religion by deceptious ſignatures, and who, practiſing upon the vulgar, reaped advantages from a diſplay of relics and of ſacred ſhews, deemed thoſe of lay-dramatiſts as injurious to their conſequence, and hurtful to their profits. But, both the firſt and the laſt, for theſe different motives, were unanimous in the extermination of the devoted object. The whole round of the drama was interdicted, its compoſitions anathematized, and the exhibitors marked with ſtigma.

A BRAND impreſſed deep in the face of the profeſſion, entailed upon its poſterity, and of which, though the unſightlineſs of the ſcar is worn

worn out, the ſkin continues ſtill to be diſcoloured.

NOT only to repreſent, but to be preſent at theatrical repreſentations, was, by St Auſtin, ſolemnly pronounced a moſt *crying ſin*; and in the midſt of this his inveteracy againſt the ſtage, to ſuch a height did he carry his religious zeal, that he moſt earneſtly implored forgiveneſs of his Maker, for having in his early years been *ſo profane* as to have *read Virgil*.

Lactantius, *Bede*, and other venerable guides, who joined in decrying ſtage performances, declared, "The Tale of the *Antipodes* to be only an idle ſtory, a ridiculous romance*; yet theſe, the great *luminaries* of the church, who have been ſolemnly canonized, and from whoſe opinions the profeſſion of an

* In the year of our Saviour 745, the Archbiſhop of *Mentz* met with a treatiſe concerning the *Antipodes*, written by *Virgilius*, Biſhop of *Saltſbourg*; away flew the over zealous Archbiſhop, firſt to the Duke of *Bohemia*, and from hence to Pope *Zachry*, who, by virtue of his *infallibility*, condemned poor *Virgilius* for an heretic, becauſe he was the author of a book, which broached ſuch moſt damnable doctrine. ANNALS OF THE DRAMA, p. 12.

an actor is to this day ill ſpoken of. For what was the outcry of the councils and fathers againſt players? Nothing more, than that theſe heated zealots, in the rage of their religious furor, madly imagined them to be Heathen tradition-holders, to be reliquekeepers of Paganiſm, and that their works were appropriated, and utterly devoted to the worſhip of falſe gods."

"BESIDES, theſe very fathers were in fact little leſs than players themſelves; they were guilty of many devices, excluſive of the tricks of the Cybils, to endeavour to prove the truth of a religion, which, like the ſun, wanted only to be ſeen to be reverenced for its brightneſs*."

THE multitude, endowed by nature with a promptitude for dramatic ſhews, having been

* Let the reader, if he pleaſes, conſult Cauſabon's exercitations upon *Baronius*, *Blondel* on the *Cybils*, and the decrees of Pope Gelaſius, who prohibits counterfeit prophets, counterfeit goſpels, and counterfeit acts of apoſtles; all of which ſcenes, and many more, theſe reverend reformers, the fathers, played upon the minds of the ignorant; and acted religious chicaneries as groſs as the greateſt errors of the moſt unenlightened Paganiſm. ANNALS OF THE DRAMA, p. 11.

been precluded from their favourite attendance upon ſacred ſpectacles by their formal ſuppreſſion, contrived for themſelves lay compoſitions and performances, without the pale of the church's cenſure.

THEY conſiſted of games at merry-meetings and feſtivals, wakes, tides, and ruſh-bearings*, which, though not expreſsly theatrical, were notwithſtanding of ſuch a kind, as to be analagous with thoſe of the drama.

THEY were more particularly in practice by the Chriſtmas-gambolers, May-dayers, maurice-dancers, and maſkers. The principal of theſe annual aſſociations were the ſolemnization of the games of Robin Hood, and the Abbot, or Lord of Miſrule.

AMONG the earlieſt incidents of life, I recollect ſeeing, in a remote part of England, one of thoſe ſets of irregulars, in that country, called *mummers*; from which appella-

* Before the flagging, or flooring, of churches were introduced, it was a cuſtom at the Saints Tide to cover the ground with ruſhes, which they bore in proceſſion; from which practice the name of *Ruſhbearing* was derived.

tion, that *outré* mode of playing, commonly practiced by itinerant actors, and ſometimes even upon the eſtabliſhed Theatres, is, we preſume, ſtiled mumming: It was compoſed of young men, farmers ſons, and thoſe of decent tradeſmen. They had with them, as is cuſtomary, a Clown, the ancient *Fool of the Hall:* He had on a patched jacket and trowſers, with a fox's tail to his cap.

THE *firſt piece*, or play, compriſed a kind of *Harlequin* plot, with a father, daughter, and two lovers. The fool of the hall carried off the lady, to the joy of the ruſtic audience; the father was reconciled, and the lovers made happy.

THE interlude repreſented the ſtaggering of a drunkard, with his glaſs and bottle; and the concluſion, or farce, was a compound of ſome tricks of the fool, who was ſuppoſed to be killed; and after being tumbled about in different poſitions, frightened his companions from the ſtage, which cloſed the ſcene.

THE amuſements of the evening were prefaced with a ſong, of perhaps thirty ſtanzas, by

by way of prologue; the hereditary office, I was given to underſtand, of the motley fool. The purport of the compoſition was to announce the performers, who came on one after another, following the *Clown* in a circle, till the whole, with their characters and abilities, were pointed out to the audience.

THE firſt verſe of this ſingular production I have endeavoured to recollect,

"My name it is Captain Calf-tail, Calf-tail,
"And on my back it is plain to be ſeen;
"Although I am ſimple, and wear a fool's cap,
"I am dearly belov'd of a queen."

THROUGH the whole of theſe performances, which had been handed down from father to ſon, with improvements and alterations for centuries paſt, appeared the outlines of a Lalouſe, a Hippeſly, and a Lun. But as the exhibitors had never been at a play, nor within the walls of a play-houſe, the originality of the performances muſt have been with them.

THE celebration of the game of Robin Hood and Little John, took place in the

month of May. The inhabitants of a certain number of hamlets, or villages, ſelected for that purpoſe, met together in an open place, as centrical as poſſible; where the two leaders, Robin and the ſquire, with a ſelect party as yeomen, were choſen from amidſt the vaſt group, who continued as ſpectators of the ſports.

By this choſen band, the feats of Robin Hood and his merry men were enacted; his reſcuing his impriſoned followers from the ſheriff of Notingham, his robbing the Biſhop of Hereford, and making him dance round an oak in Barnſdale, his conteſt with the pindar of Wakefield, and many other exploits of that favourite and celebrated outlaw.

These ſports were exhibited upon a Sunday, or feſtival; and ſo wedded were the populace to this daily amuſement, that the churches were left empty by their pariſhioners, who crowded to pay their reſpects to Robin Hood.

A reverend prelate, when preaching before Edward VI. declared, that coming to a certain

certain town, in order to deliver a diſcourſe, of which he had ſent previous notice, inſtead of finding a crowded congregation awaiting his arrival, it was half an hour before the key of the church could be found, and he was informed, "This is a buſy day with us; we cannot hear you: It is Robin Hood's day: The pariſh are gone abroad to gather for Robin Hood. I pray you let, (*hinder*) them not. I was fain (continues the Biſhop) to give place to Robin Hood. I thought my rocket ſhould have been regarded, though I ſhould not: But it would not ſerve; it was fain to give place to Robin Hood's men*."

THE Abbot, or Lord of Miſrule, in England, and Abbot of Un-reaſon, in Scotland, preſided over the Chriſtmas revels, ſuſtained a principal character in their interludes, entertained them with diſcourſe, and cloſed the ſcene with an addreſs of his own compoſing, by way of epilogue.

THE games of Robin Hood and Little John were exceedingly popular in Scotland, and

* Latimer's Sermons, p. 73.

and the attempts to ſuppreſs them created no ſmall degree of animoſity and diſturbance.

"WHEN the minds of the people," ſays Mr Arnot, "came to be agitated with religious controverſy, it was found neceſſary to repreſs the game of Robin Hood by public ſtatue*. The populace were by no means willing to relinquiſh

* Sixth Parliament of Queen Marie, XX. June 1555, cap. 61.

Item, It is ſtatute and ordained, that in all times cumming, na manner of perſon be choſen *Robert Hude*, nor *Little John*, *Abbot* of *Un-reaſon*, *Queenis* of *Maii*, nor otherwiſe, nouther in burgh, nor to landward, in onie time to cum: And gif ony provoſt, baillies, councell, and communitie, chuſe ſik ane perſonage, as *Robert Hude*, *Little John*, *Abotis* of *Un-reaſon*, or *Queenis* of *Maii*, within burgh, the chuſers of ſik ſall tine their freedome, for the ſpace of five zeires, and otherwiſe, ſall be puniſhed at the Queenis grace will, and the acceptar of ſik like office ſhall be baniſhed foorth of the realme: And gif ony ſik perſones, ſik as *Robert Hude*, *Little John*, *Abotis* of *Un-reaſon*, *Queenis* of *Maii*, beis choſen outwith burgh, and uthers landward townes, the chuſers ſall pay to our ſoveraine ladie, ten pounds, and their perſones put in waird, there to remaine during the Queenis grace pleaſure: And gif onie women, or others, about ſummer trees, ſingand makes perturbation to the Queenis lieges, in the paſſage throw burrowes, and other landward townes, the women perturbatoures, for ſkafrie of money, or otherwiſe, ſall be taken, handled, and put upon the cuck ſtules of everie burgh or towne.

relinquiſh their favourite amuſement. Year after year, the magiſtrates of Edinburgh were obliged to exert their authority in repreſſing this game, often ineffectually*."

"In the year 1561, the mob were ſo enraged at being diſappointed in *making a Robin Hood*, that they roſe in mutiny, ſeized on the city gates, committed robberies upon ſtrangers, and one of the ringleaders being condemned by the magiſtrates to be hanged, the mob forced open the jail, ſet at liberty the criminal and all the priſoners, and broke in pieces the gibbet erected at the croſs for executing the malefactor. They next aſſaulted the magiſtrates, who were ſitting in the council chamber†, and who fled to the tolbooth for ſhelter, where the mob attacked them, battering the doors, and pouring ſtones thro' the windows. Application was made to the deacons of the corporations, to appeaſe the tumult. Remaining, however, unconcerned ſpectators, they made this anſwer, "*They will be magiſtrates alone: Let them rule the*

* Council Regiſter, v. IV. p. 4. 30.

† Knox's Hiſtory, p. 270.

the multitude alone." The magiſtrates were kept in confinement, till they made proclamation be publiſhed, offering indemnity to the rioters, upon laying down their arms. Still, however, ſo late as the year 1592, we find the General Aſſembly complaining of the profanation of the Sabbath by making of *Robin Hood plays**."

THAT ſtrong prepoſſeſſion, we have already noticed, for ſtage repreſentations, ſo prevalent in unperverted nature, on the final ſuppreſſion of the games beforementioned, burſt forth in a ſhape more diſpleaſing to the oppoſers of every mode of recreation; For we find, from reſpectable authority, that in the year 1601, an attempt was made avowedly, and by royal ſanction, to open a houſe in the city of Edinburgh, for the repreſentation of ſtage plays.

"THE King having that year licenced a company of comedians to act in Edinburgh, the city-clergy exclaimed loudly in their ſermons againſt dramatic entertainments and actors,

* Book of Univerſal Kirk, p. 414.

actors in their seſſion, and forbade the people to attend the play-houſe, on pain of church-cenſures. This was certainly carrying the thing farther than it ought; for the ſtage, under proper regulation, may be made no mean auxiliary to the pulpit; beſides, whatever contributes to make life glide harmleſsly on, is at leaſt not criminal. The *young*, *gay*, and *fair*, though they did not dare to diſobey their teachers, yet every where vented their indignation againſt their monkiſh auſterity, while the King, who juſtly regarded the prohibition as an inſult on his prerogative, called the members of the ſeſſion before him, and ordained them to annul it. This they unwillingly did the day after, and the play-houſe became more crowded than ever*."

At a more recent period, ſometime between the years 1718 and 1730, I hear of a Theatre, under the direction of one Tony Alſton, in a cloſe on the north ſide of the High Street, near Smith's land. A Mrs Millar, at that era, was eſteemed a capital actreſs; and was alſo a very handſome woman. Mr Weſtcombe was the principal comedian. The

* Maitland's Hiſtory of Scotland, v. II. p. 1294.

ſcheme was ſupported by annual tickets, ſubſcribed for by the favourers of the drama; but, as uſual, met with diſapprobation from its declared opponents.

So violent were the enthuſiaſts even of latter days, and ſo enflamed the minds of their zealous and gloomy followers, againſt all kinds of meetings, for recreation or amuſement of a public nature, that, about the beginning of this century, even at an aſſembly for dancing only, the company were aſſaulted, and the doors of the building perforated with red-hot ſpits.

THEIR principal objections to the eſtabliſhment of ſtage performances were, That they held out allurements dangerous to youth: That they gave offence to the public at large, by their tendency to licentiouſneſs: And that they were injurious to the poor.

WE ſhall not, in reply to theſe allegations, launch out into that detail of argument, which naturally preſſes upon the ſubject: Suffice it to obſerve, that the ſtage, which has made a part in the entertainments of every civilized

zed ſtate, when ſet in competition with their other amuſements, as vehicles of inſtructive and rational tendency, cannot poſſibly ſuffer in the compariſon. And as, from the frame and conſtitution of the minds of men, relaxations are neceſſary, thoſe of the ſtage, after the cloſeſt inveſtigation, muſt be favoured with a preferable exiſtence.

YOUNG people, of every denomination, if inclined to be idle, will eaſily find excuſes from buſineſs or ſtudy; and we appeal to the directors of youth, either maſters, preceptors, or fathers, whether they would not rather prefer the beholding their pupils at the Theatre, where people of rank and liberal profeſſions, capable of enforcing reſpect and decency by their preſence and example, may approve or explode their conduct, rather than hear of their immoral conduct at more dangerous meetings, where they have no reſtrictions over them, either from a ſenſe of decency or ſhame.

TALKING upon this ſubject ſome years ago with Mr Bolton of Birmingham, who

kept, and I believe ſtill keeps, a moſt extenſive work at that place, in which he then gave employment to not leſs than 500 hands, he aſſured me, that whenever his people were inclined to relax, he conſtantly recommended it to them to go to the play; for then, continued he, I am ſure of ſeeing them in the morning, ſober and pleaſed: Whereas, on the other hand, if they were to make a St Monday at foot-ball, fives, or ſkittles, they adjourned to the ale-houſe in the evening, and ſeldom appeared at their buſineſs the following day, or perhaps for days after. Mentioning this circumſtance lately to a merchant from the ſame town, I was aſſured, that the above ſentiments were thoſe of the manufacturers, in general, in that diſtrict.

We will not contend, that exceptionable actions and paſſages do not frequently exiſt upon the ſtage. But the audience have it conſtantly in their eye to correct them: for if there were no purchaſers of ribaldry, there could be no retailers of it. "Alas!" obſerves Colley Cibber,

"Where's that palace, whereinto ſometimes,
"Foul things intrude not?" SHAKESPEARE.

"But

"But I cannot allow them to impeach the profeſſion, while they are ſo palpably owing to the depraved taſte of the multitude, with whom caſual follies are the moſt profitable commodities. Why ſhould we wonder, that, time out of mind, the poor comedian, when real wit would bear no price, ſhould deal in what would bring him moſt ready money*."

But theſe liberties, which the author ſo much complains of in the comedies of his time, have been ſufficiently exploded, and the exceptionable paſſages, under a decent regulation, have been corrected, or ſuppreſſed in the repreſentation; and I am convinced, that if ſome of the popular pieces of thoſe days had been now produced, with the paſſages they contained, they would not be ſuffered *one moment* to exiſt. The reformation thus wrought proves the truth of Colley Cibber's aſſertion, "That the corruption of the Theatre is no diſproof of its innate and primative utility."

With reſpect to the other article of objection, that the profeſſion is injurious to the poor,

* Colley Cibber, p. 50.

poor, we are apt to believe, that ſhould we incline to ſport in figures, and indulge in calculation, we ſhould find it no difficult taſk to aſcertain, by proof, that the effects of ſtage repreſentations are the very reverſe.

PROVIDENCE, for the well-being and exiſtence of ſociety, has neceſſarily placed mankind in a ſtate of ſubordinancy; and every individual deſerves well of the community, by living up to the rank in which he has been placed. Money expended by the rich flows into the pockets of the tradeſmen, for the purchaſe of clothing, and the furniſhing their equipage and tables; from thence it deſcends to the ſupport of the poor, by being paid for their labour, through the ſeveral articles of conſumption.

PLACES of amuſement occaſion an increaſe of expence, which, yielding employment and conſumption of goods for the ſpinſtreſs, the weaver, and the cloathier, the deſcending advantages land ultimately in the relief of the poor.

SHUT up the places of reſort for faſhionable parties, and deprive them of thoſe amuſe-

ments

ments for which they have a natural reliſh; and they will tire of continuing in a town, where they are debarred from rational amuſements, and fly to other places diveſted of ſuch a prevailing antipathy; where the money they there expend would indeed be loſt to their native poor.

THE ſtage, and its appendages, moſt certainly contribute as much to the exigencies of the ſtate, and the aid of the community, as any ſociety whatſoever; that of Edinburgh more particularly ſo perhaps than many others: For there the frequenters of the galleries being fewer in proportion, their expences are leſs, and the advantages accruing to the lower order of people conſequently larger. Few actors, it ſhould be obſerved, are ſuch œconomiſts as to become rich: The whole receipts of the Theatre, therefore, roll on to the influx of the community at large.

EVERY actor muſt have a lodging, muſt be cloathed and fed. Thus, houſe-rents, taxes, and the venders of the neceſſaries of life, receive ſupplies from them: And the reſources towards the ſubſiſtence of the poor acquire no inconſiderable ſhare of augmentation from

from the funds of the Theatre. Since the commencement of my management, the ſums collected at the doors of the Edinburgh play-houſe, for *charitable purpoſes*, have not amounted to leſs than *two thouſand pounds ſterling*.

After weighing the above conſiderations with that nicety which the ſubject requires, inſtead of joining in with the aſſertion of the zealots of the laſt century, the reader will agree with us in thinking, that the performances of the ſtage are attended with different conſequences, than the vitiating the morals of youth, and diſtreſſing the poor; he will rather exclaim with us, in the words of a modern writer,

"For other purpoſe was that ſpot deſign'd,
"To purge the paſſions, and reform the mind:
"To give to nature all the force of art,
"And, while it charms the ear, to mend the heart."

APPENDIX.

GR III

No. I.

A

MAGNIFICENT SPECTACLE,

ENTITLED,

THE ENTERTAINMENT

OF THE

HIGH AND MIGHTY MONARCH,

CHARLES,

KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND IRELAND,

Into his Ancient and Royal City of

EDINBURGH,

THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF JUNE 1633.

Abridged from a full Copy, printed in Edinburgh the ſame Year.

WITHOUT the gate which is towards the weſt, where the ſtreete aſcendeth to Heroites Hoſpital did an arch ariſe ſquare with the battlements and inmoſt ſide of the towne-wall; the face looking to the caſtle repreſented a citie ſituated on a rock, which, with pointed clifts, ſhrubs, trees, herbs, and verdure, did appeare in perſpective.

THE theater under the arch was a mountaine, upon which appeared the genius of the towne, repreſented by a nymph; ſhe was attired in a ſea-

greene velvet mantle, her ſleeves and under roabe of blue tiſſue, with blue buſkins on her feete; aboute her necke ſhee wore a chaine of diamonds; the dreſſing of her head repreſented a caſtle with turrets, her locks dangled about her ſhoulders.

The mountaine, at the approach of the King's Majeſtie, moved, and the nymph thus ſpake unto him.

Sir,

"If nature could ſuffer rockes to move, and abandon their natural places, this towne, founded on the ſtrength of rockes, had, with her caſtle, temples, and houſes, moved towards you, and beſought you to acknowledge her yours, and her indwellers your moſt affectionate ſubjects.—And here, Sir, ſhe offers by me to the altar of your glorie, whole hecatombes of moſt happy deſires:—Preſenting you, Sir, who art the ſtrong key of this little world of Great Britain, with theſe keyes, which caſt up the gates of her affection, and deſigne you power to open all the ſprings of the hearts of theſe her moſt loyal citizens—The old forget their age, and looke freſh and young, at the ſight of ſo gracious a prince; the young bear a part in your welcome, deſiring many years of life, that they may ſerve you long.—Daigne then, Sir, from the higheſt of majeſtie, to looke downe on their lowneſſe, and embrace it; accept the homage of their humble minds, accept their grateful zeale, which they have ever carried to the higheſt deſerts of your anceſtors, and ſhall ever to your owne and your royal race, whilſt theſe rocks ſhall be ourſhadowed with buildings,

theſe

theſe buildings inhabited by men, and while men bee endued either with counſell or courage, or enjoy any peece of reaſon, ſenſe, or life."

The keyes being delivered in a baſon of ſilver, and his majeſtie received by the majeſtrates, under a pale of ſtate—Where the ſtreete aſcendeth proudeſt, beginning to turn to the gate of the old towne, he meeteth with an arch: The frontiſpiece of this repreſented in land-ſkip, a countrey wild, full of trees, buſhes, bores, white kine; along the which appeared one great mountaine to extend itſelf, with the word upon it,

GRAMPIUS.

In ſome parts was ſeene the ſea enriched with corrall, and the muſſell that conceiveth the pearle; farther off in an iſland, appeared a flaming mountaine, with the words,

Tibi ſerviet ultima Thule.

On the chapter was a lion rampant, the words,

Imperat ipſe ſibi.

A courten falling, the theater diſcovered a lady attired in tiſſue, her haire was dreſſed like a *Cornucopia*, two chaynes, one of gold, another of pearle, baudrike wayes, hung downe her ſhoulders; a crowne of gold hung from the arch before her; ſhe repreſented the *Genius* of *Caledonia*.

His majeſtie coming neere, was welcomed with theſe verſes by Caledonia.

The heav'ns have heard our vowes, our juſt deſires
Obtained are; no higher now aſpires
Our wiſhing thoughts, ſince to his native clime,
The flower of princes, honour of his time,
Is come, and radient to us in his traine
The golden age and virtues brings againe.——

The Genius of Caledonia continues her addreſs in a ſtrain of the higheſt adulation and panegyric, to the extent of an hundred intervening lines, and obſerving, that,

For as moones ſplendor from her brother ſprings,
The peoples welfare ſtreameth from their kings.

She concludes by exhorting the people, to

Pray that thoſe crownes his anceſtors did weare,
His temples long, (more orient) may beare,
That good he reach, by ſweetneſſe of his ſway,
That even his ſhaddow may the bad affray;
That heaven on him, what he deſires, beſtow,
That ſtill the glory of his greatneſſe grow;
That your begunne feliceties may laſt,
That no Orion doe with ſtormes them blaſt;
That victory his brave exployts attend,
Eaſt, weſt, or ſouth, do he his forces bend,
Till his great deads, all former deeds ſurmount,
And quaile the Nimbrot of the Helleſpont.
That when his well-ſpent care all care becalmes,
He may in peace ſleep in a ſhade of palmes;
And rearing up fair trophees, that heavens may
Extend his life to world's extreameſt day.

Where the great ſtreete divideth itſelf in two, upon the old foundations, inhabited by the gold-

ſmiths

ſmiths and glovers, did an arch ariſe: upon the chapter was a crowne, ſet with this word,

Nec primam viſa eſt ſimilem, nec habere ſecundam.

Amidst flouriſhes of armes, as helmes, lances, corſlets, pikes, muſkets, bowes, cannons, at the one ſide of the *abacke*, ſtood Mars; the word by him was,

Patrium cognoſcite numen.

At the other ſide, among flouriſhes of inſtruments of peace, as harpes, lutes, organs, ciſſeres, hauboiſes, ſtood Minerva; her word,

Quo ſine me.

At the approach of the King, the theater, (a courten drawne) manifeſted Mercury, with his feathered hat and his caduceus, with an hundred and ſeven Scottiſh Kings, which he had brought from the Eliſian Fields; Fergus the firſt had a ſpeech in Latine, which is here deſired.

In the midſt of the ſtreete there was a mountain dreſſed for Parnaſſus, where Apollo and the Muſes appeared, and ancient worthies of Scotland, for learning was repreſented; ſuch as Sedullius, Joannes Dunns, Biſhop Elphiſtoun of Aberdeen, Hector Boes, Biſhop Sawers Douglaſſe, Sir David Lindſay, Georgius Buchananus; the word over them was,

Fama ſuper æthera noti.

The Muſes were clad in varying taffetas, cloth of ſilver, and purple. Melpomine, though her under

under veſture was black, yet her buſkines and mantle was crimſon; they were diſtinguiſhed by ſcutcheons, and every one had a word; the firſt was Clio, who bare,

Si vis omnia tibi ſubjice, ſubjice te rationi.

which was the King's ſimbole when he was Prince.

Apollo, ſitting in the midſt of them, was clad in crimſon taffeta, covered with ſome purple of gold, with a bowdricke like the raine-bow, a mantle of tiſſue knit together above his left ſhoulder; his head was crowned with laurell, with locks long and like gold; he preſented the King with a booke.

Where the great ſtreete contracteth itſelfe at the deſcent of the eaſtern gate of the towne, did an arch ariſe. The face of this repreſented a heaven, into which appeared his Majeſty's aſcendant Virgo. She was beautified with ſix and twenty ſtares.

The ſtand diſcovered the ſeven planets ſitting on a throne, and Endymion.

They were all clad in emblematical dreſſes, rich in embroidery, elegant and fanciful; and had every one their motto, or word, as the author calls it.

Mars appeared with his haire and beard red, a ſword at his ſide, his robe of deepe crimſon taffeta, embroidered with wolves and horſes; his head bare, a helmet, and his ſcutcheon,

Per tela, per hoſtes.

Venus had the attire of her head riſing like parts in a coronet, and roſes: ſhe was in a mantle of greene damaſke, embroidered with doves; inſtead

inſtead of her ceſtus, ſhe wore a ſcarfe of diverſe coloures; her word,

Nullas recipit tua gloria metas.

At a corner of the theater, from out a verdant grove, came Endymion. He was apparelled like a ſhepherd, in a long coat of crimſon velvet, coming over his knee; he had a wreath of flowres upon his head; his haire was curled and long: in his hand he bare a ſheep-hooke; on his legs were buſkines of gilt leather: Theſe before the King had this actioune.

ENDYMION.

Rous'd from the Latmian cave, where many years
That empreſs of the loweſt of the ſpheres,
Who cheeres the night, and kept me hid apart
From mortal weights, to eaſe her love-ſick heart;
As young as when ſhe did me firſt incloſe,
As freſh in beauty as the maying roſe,
Endymion; that whilome kept my flocks
Upon Iona's flowry hills and rockes,
And, warbling ſweet lays to my Cynthia's beams,
Out-ſang the ſwannets of Meander's ſtreams.——

He proceds to ſay, in a ſpeech of thirty-ſix lines, that he is diſpatched by Cynthia to celebrate the day, where all the ſtarres of heaven are aſſembled; He obſerves,

Nor is it ſtrange, if they heav'ns night neglect,
Unwonted worth produceth like effect;
Then this it is thy preſence, royal youth,
Hath brought them here within an azymouth,

To tell by me, their herald, coming things,
And what each Fate to her ſterne diſtaffe ſings:
For what is firme decreed in heaven above,
In vaine on earth ſtrive mortals to improve.

THE planets then proced by rotation, in the ſame kind of verſe, and at ſome length, to augur to his majeſty every happineſs their benign influence could impart. The laſt ſtanzas of each are only here inſerted,

SATURNE.

LIFE long ſhall not be thrall'd to mortall deats;
Thus heav'ns decree, ſo have ordain'd the fates.

JOVE.

TILL thou the greateſt be among the greats,
Thus heav'ns ordaine, ſo doe decree the fates.

MARS.

THY triumphs finiſh ſhall all old debates;
Thus heav'ns decree, ſo have ordain'd the fates.

SUNNE.

THOU open ſhalt Parnaſſus' chriſtal gates;
Thus heav'ns ordaine, ſo doe decree the fates.

VENUS.

THY hymenean bed faire brood ſhall grace,
Which on the earth continue ſhall their race,
While Phœbus beams her brother emulates;
Thus heav'ns decree, ſo have ordain'd the fates.

MERCURY.

WEALTH, honour, armes, and arts, ſhall grace thy ſtates;
Thus heav'ns ordaine, ſo doe decree the fates.

THE

THE MOONE.

MALICE, deceit, rebellion, impudence,
Beyond the Garamants, ſhall pack them hence,
With every monſter that thy glory hates;
Thus heav'ns decree, ſo have ordain'd the fates.

ENDYMION then rejoining, directs his concluding lines to the populace,

AND, people, let it not be hid from you,
What mountaines noyſe, and floods proclaime as true;
Whenever fame abroad his prayſe ſhall ſing,
All ſhall obſerve, and ſerve this bleſſed King.

THE whole concluded with an epilogue, which the author entitled an

EPIGRAMME.

ILLUSTRIOUS top-bough of heroicke ſtemme,
Whoſe head is crown'd with glories anademe,
My ſhallow muſe, not daring to draw neare
Bright Phœbus' burning flames in his career;
Yet knowing ſurely that Apollo ſhines
Upon the dunghill, as on golden mines;
And knowing this the bounty of beſt Kings,
To marke the giver, not the gifted things,
Doth bouldly venture, in this pompous throng,
To greet thy greatneſſe with a welcome ſong;
And with the pye doth ave Cæſar ſing,
While graver wits doe greater off'rings bring.

No. II.

Woolhampton, 2d February 1762.

SIR,

I RECEIVED your letter: am glad to hear of the ſucceſs you have met with in your preſent employment, and wiſh you a continuance and encreaſe of it. I have complied with your deſire of writing to Lord Sommerville, though I have not the pleaſure of being acquainted with his Lordſhip. Lady Fingall writes this poſt, and will mention you to Lord and Lady Traquaire, and joins with me in wiſhing you health and ſucceſs. I am,

Your obedient ſervant,
FINGALL.

John Jackſon, Eſq; at Mr Love's,
Canongate, Edinburgh.

No. III.

Birching-lane, Lombard-ſtreet, London,
January 27. 1762.

MR JACKSON,

SIR,

By the deſire of my good friend Mr Wiſhaw, I have writ this poſt to the Honourable George Drummond, Eſq; firſt commiſſioner of the cuſtoms, and late your Lord Provoſt of Edinburgh. As he is a gentlemen of one of the firſt families in your city,

and

and well beloved, I have recommended you to his favour; and I make no doubt but ſome of his family will aſk when you heard from their friend John Bigſby of Birching-lane, London. Mr Drummond's late wife was a Quaker, of the ſame denomination as myſelf, and by that means our friendſhip came. I have recommended you as a gentleman, and a man of good family and honour, and, I make no doubt, you will keep up that character. I am,

With all due reſpect,
Thy ſincere friend,
JOHN BIGSBY.

My Dear Friend,

It always gave me great pleaſure to hear of your welfare. My late illneſs prevented my writing to you, as uſual; and as I am ſatisfied it will not be diſagreeable, I take this opportunity from my fire-ſide, being much better in my health, though, through the channel of Mrs Pont's letter from you to her, and from Mrs Strettle, I have heard you were in health. You are not forgot by many of our beſt friends in this city, and are often aſked after with great good will and pleaſure. When I ſupped laſt night at Mr Pont's, we remembered all friends in Edinburgh and Germany, and ſucceſs to the army and fleets. My dear friend, there is a young man come down from London, who has engaged himſelf with the maſter of your Theatre for this ſeaſon:

His

His name is John Jackſon: he is a perſon of good character, a gentleman's ſon, and has been educated as ſuch, and nothing will do for him but the ſtage, in which I hope he will ſucceed; and as your family is large, and I make no doubt but Doctor Drummond and his lady divert themſelves ſometimes at the houſe, and ſometimes ſome other gentlemen of your acquaintance and family; if they would be ſo kind as to take a little notice of him, it would be a great ſervice to him, and make him to be reſpected among the better ſort of people. I well know you will ſmile, that one under my denomination ſhould recommend one of his calling: it is for the ſake of his father, who is a very worthy gentleman, and all his family of good character. I hope, my good friend, you will excuſe the freedom I have taken, and I leave the affair to your better judgement, as I know no perſon that delights in doing good more than yourſelf. Pleaſe to make my compliments to the Doctor and his Lady, and all the reſt of your good family. I ſhould be glad to be favoured with a line of your welfare when at leiſure. In the interim, I am,

With all due reſpect,
Thy ſincere friend,
JOHN BIGSBY.

The Honourable
George Drummond, Eſq; Edinburgh.

GEORGE DRUMMOND, Eſq; to whom the foregoing letter was addreſſed, had filled the office of Chief Magiſtrate of Edinburgh, with dignity and credit to himſelf, and to the advantage and embelliſhment of the

the city. To his exertions the public are indebted for thoſe noble buildings, the Infirmary and the Royal Exchange. The North Bridge, and the New Town, had their origin from his views of improvement, as he did me the honour to point out, in our way from Drummond Lodge to the Croſs, through the then diſagreeable round-a-bout road, along the narrow lane from Bonnington, through Leith Wynd, and the Nether-bow. He lived to ſee his favourite plan carried, in part, into effect; and enjoyed in idea, the formation of thoſe ſtreets and ſquares, we now in reality behold.

Provost Drummond's oppoſition to ſtage performances appeared to me rather in compliance with his official capacity, and the temper of the times, than from any formed opinion, or ſettled diſlike. His hoſpitable reception of, and liberal mode of treatment towards the author, then a member of the profeſſion, ſhewed at leaſt, that the principles of perſecution formed no part of his compoſition.

No. IV.

EXTRACTS from ACTS of PARLIAMENT, reſpecting Theatrical Exhibitions, Statute 12th Queen Anne, 10th George II. February 1. 1736, 10th George III. c. 27. 28th George III. 1788. for which, ſee page 300, 301, 303, 304.

No.

No. V.

PROLOGUE ſpoken by Mr Love, on Mr Jackson's firſt Appearance in the Character of *Oroonoko*, at the Theatre in Edinburgh, *January* 9. 1762.

YE awful critics, who delight to wage
Eternal war, and laſh the harmleſs ſtage,
For three ſhort hours, let dire reſentment ceaſe,
And ſoft compaſſion ſoothe your minds to peace.
An humble youth to-night, of tender years,
Rude to the ſcene, and curb'd with riſing fears,
Implores your aid.—O! could ſuch goodneſs flow
From your kind hearts, his would with rapture glow.
Too ſoon, alas! imprudently he finds
His feeble bark entruſted to the winds;
Soft and unſeaſon'd, it contends in vain
With the rude torrents of the boiſt'rous main;
Nor long can live, unleſs with piteous hand,
You'll guide the helm, and ſteer it ſafe to land.
This preſent age one Roſcius only knows;
Who, Pallas-like, in full perfection roſe;
Aloft he tow'rd, and on the ſhrine of fame,
Above the Roman plac'd his Britiſh name.
Our youth attempts not yet ſuch heights to ſoar;
Endure him now; he hopes to pleaſe you more.
From you this night his ſentence he'll receive,
With lenience then a gentle judgement give.
Through ſcenes unknown, uncertainly he ſtrays,
And treads with tim'rous ſteps the doubtful ways.
Void of experience, and of every art,
Plain ſimple nature actuates his heart.

Nature alas! in theſe politer days,
Too rude, too artleſs to contend for praiſe.
" * Yet if ſome hopes of rip'ning merit live
" In this young plant, your kind aſſiſtance give:
" With copious hand, into its leaves infuſe
" Your gentle ſhow'rs, and breath propitious dews;
" And if, mature with age and culture grown,
" It fruit produces—'Twill be all your own."

No. VI.

PROLOGUE ſpoken by Mr JACKSON, before the play of the Haunted Houſe, for the Benefit of Mr LANCASHIRE, *Saturday, March* 27. 1762.

IF in this wiſe, this wonder-working age,
We bring a Ghoſt upon the Scottiſh ſtage,
No cynic ſure, will treat with ill-tim'd paſſion
The univerſal vogue, the reigning faſhion!
In London, now, whoſe modes you all admire,
Whoſe very foibles ſet your ſouls on fire,
The grave, the gay, the rev'rend, and the fair,
From joyous ſcenes of crouded life repair,
And at the midnight hour, with anxious pain,
Attend—*the knocking ſpirit in Cock-lane.*
With awful, melancholy, diſmal faces,
Prieſts, peers, and trembling virgins take their places;
Impatient, all the dreadful minute watching,
When—*Madam Fanny ſhall begin her ſcratching*—

* The laſt ſix lines were inſerted at the concluſion of the prologue to Eldred, or the Britiſh-freeholder.

Strange! that this Ghoſt—a female too, and young—
Should have all powers at will—except her tongue:
Were not the age ſo prone to ſelf-deceiving,
That circumſtance alone is paſt believing.
Ladies, no treaty with ſuch ſprites is here,
As are not free of ſpeech, and wont appear;
We'll prove the ſtory of our phantom true,
And fairly bring him out to public view;
Nay, make him ſpeak, like any modern blade,
And goſſip freely with my lady's maid;
Nor keep you up all night to ſee his tricks;
Ladies—our Ghoſt begins to walk at ſix.
His martial muſic, and a ſoldier's air,
We hope may recommend him to the fair.
All dread of airy viſions then ſubdue,
Nor ſtart nor *tremble* if the lights burn blue:
Tho' with a Ghoſt our comedy is heighten'd,
Ladies—upon my word you ſhan't be frighten'd.
Ours is a Ghoſt that's faithful, fond and true,
Made up of fleſh and blood, as well as you:
Then every evening come in crouds undaunted,
We never think this houſe is too much haunted.

PROLOGUE ſpoken by MR JACKSON, in the character of a *Maſter Maſon*, before the play of the Recruiting Officer,

By Deſire of the Right Honourable the Earl of ELGIN, *Grand Maſter of the Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Maſons, April* 17. 1762.

WHEN the Grand Maſter, and great Lord of all,
Call'd up from Chaos this terreſtrial ball,
He gave the word, and ſwift o'er eldeſt night,
Beam'd the firſt dawning of celeſtial light.

Confuſion

Confuſion heard his voice, and murm'ring fled,
Whilſt Order rul'd, and triumph'd in its ſtead;
Diſcordant atoms, rang'd from pole to pole,
Forgot to jar, and peace poſſeſs'd the whole:
The fierceſt foes in mutual concord ſtrove,
And all (at once) was harmony and love.

By this example taught, Free Maſons join,
And full in ſight, purſue the heav'nly ſign.
With love's firm bands connected, hand in hand,
On Friendſhip's ſolid baſe, ſecure we ſtand,
While confidence and truſt, by turns impreſt,
Beam heav'nly influence on each conſcious breaſt.
No party feuds, no fierce inteſtine jars,
No ſenſeleſs tumults, no pernicious wars,
Diſturb our calm repoſe, where peace alone,
In decent order fills the friendly throne.

Can wiſdom's ſelf a nobler method find,
To charm the ſoul and harmonize mankind,
Than Teſts like ours, who labour ſtill to prove
Unblemiſh'd truth, firm faith, and mutual love?
And ye (unconſcious of the heav'nly ray)
Who ſmile, perhaps, at what theſe numbers ſay,
Confine the raſh reproach, and warn'd, forbear
To ſpurn our laws, becauſe ſome brothers err.
In nature's faireſt products faults ariſe,
But ſhall we thence all harmony deſpiſe?
Or think creation's beauteous ſcheme undone,
Becauſe ſome ſpecks appear upon the ſun?

No. VII.

EDINBURGH COMPANY,
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR FOOTE,

1771.

Meſſrs Foote,	Mrs Baker,
Woodward,	Jackſon,
Weſton,	Jewel,
Sowdon,	Didier,
Jackſon,	Waker,
Vendermore,	Fearon,
Lancaſhire,	Farrel,
Didier,	Collins.
Gentleman,	
Fearon,	8 Women.
Robſon,	
Miller,	
Waker,	
Bain,	
Knowles,	
Vowell,	
Farrel,	
Dancer,	
Maurell,	
Collins.	
20 Men.	

No. VII.

EDINBURGH COMPANY,

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR JACKSON,

1790.

Meſſrs King,
Pope,
Wilſon,
Woods,
Lamaſh,
Moſs,
Williamſon,
Archer,
Taylor,
Hallion,
Bell,
Bland ſen.
Bland jun.
J. Bland,
Charteris,
Charteris jun.
Sparks,
Woodroffe,
Lowe,
Mapples,
Bonville,
Mountfort,
Jackſon.

23 Men.

Mrs Eſten,
Barresford,
Miſs Fontenelle,
Mrs Taylor,
W. Wells,
Sparks,
Woods,
Lowe,
Clark,
Charteris,
Archer,
Mountfort,
Bland,
Jackſon.

14 Women.

No. VIII.

July 8. 1788.

SIR,

IF the parts of *Jaffier* and *Pierre* are not differently caſt before to-morrow, the play will not be allowed to go on. It is unpardonable in a manager to thruſt a fellow into a part which he muſt be ſenſible he is totally incapable of performing.

THE PUBLIC.

Mr Jackſon, Theatre Royal.

No. IX.

Already inſerted, No. VIII. as above.

No. X.

Edinburgh, 15th July 1788.

SIR,

WE are of opinion, that Mr Fennell's late deportment to the public, and your conduct as manager, with regard to that matter, require a very ample apology from both, teſtifying your deep regret for having failed in the reſpect due to them: and that if Mr Fennell refuſes to make ſuch an apology, you ought immediately to diſmiſs him: and we take this method of intimating to you, that if this opinion is not complied with, by making the apology

ſug-

ſuggeſted on Wedneſday evening, or diſmiſſing Mr Fennell, that neither we, nor our families, will hear-after frequent your Theatre, or ſhew you any countenance as manager, except that from our high regard to Mrs Siddons, we ſhall poſtpone executing our reſolution till her engagement expires.

(Signed) HENRY ERSKINE,
And by 162 other Advocates and Writers.

No. XI.

February 19. 1789.

I AM ready to atteſt, that Mrs Macrae's name was inſerted in the box-book of the Theatre, by the manager's order, for the balcony, on Monday, July 14. 1788, at ſeven o'clock in the morning by me; and that the name continued in the plan of the houſe the whole day unaltered, and ſo continues at this moment: and I likewiſe declare, that the whole of the lower boxes were filled up at the ſame hour, with the names of thoſe ladies who were to poſſeſs them that evening.

JOHN GIBB.

Edinburgh, February 19. 1789.

I HEREBY declare, that I received an order from the manager, at eight o'clock in the morning, on Monday, July 14. 1788. to inform Mrs Macrae, that her name was inſerted in the box-book for the balcony that evening.

WILLIAM SUTHERLAND.

No. XII.

MEMORIAL for the Creditors of JOHN JACKSON, at their Meeting held on the 3d day of September.

MR PLAYFAIR, for himſelf, and the other truſtee, ſtated to the meeting, that, in conſequence of the reſolution of the laſt general meeting, the truſtees had immediately inſerted advertiſements in the Edinburgh and London newſpapers, bearing, that the Edinburgh and Glaſgow Theatres were to be let by private bargain *.

THAT, previous to theſe advertiſements, offers had been made for a leaſe of the Theatres, at a very reſpectable rent, from two different quarters: That, antecedent alſo to theſe advertiſements, and previous to the laſt meeting, he, in order to know the intentions of Mr Kemble, the preſent leſſee, did, in a converſation with him, offer to give him a leaſe for another year, or even for two, at the preſent rent, which Mr Kemble declined.

THAT Mr Playfair, about the time of the laſt meeting, diſcovered, that Mr Kemble had formed a reſolution to uſe every means in his power, to prevent offerers from coming forward for the Theatres, and by that means, to get them for himſelf, at the low rent

* The meeting was held 21ſt July, and the Theatres were advertiſed 24th July.

rent of L.500 Sterling. That, with this view, paragraphs were inſerted in the London newſpapers, and induſtriouſly circulated, importing that Mr Kemble had got a perpetual right to half the property, and to the ſole management, by a deciſion of the Dean of Faculty; particularly, a paragraph to this effect, which appeared in the Star, and other London papers, at the very time that the Theatres were advertiſed here *.

ALTHOUGH no deciſion of the Dean of Faculty, in a private diſpute between Mr Jackſon and Mr Kemble, could affect the rights and intereſts of the creditors, or of the gentlemen who ſtood forward as ſureties for the compoſition payable to them; yet it became neceſſary to counteract and diſappoint the effects of theſe reports, otherwiſe there would have remained no competitors to bid for the Theatres, and Mr Kemble would have got the leaſe at any rent he thought proper.

IT was impoſſible to obviate theſe difficulties, without an interview with the perſons who were to take the leaſe. With that view, Mr Playfair went to London, and after ſome negotiation, concluded an agreement with Mrs Eſten†, containing a proviſion, that the conſent of the holders of the patent, or permiſſion to act under it, ſhould be procured, agreeable to the minutes of the meeting. In order to obtain this, applications have been made to the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas. The Duke

* See No. XV. † 10th Auguſt 1792.

has given his conſent, but Mr Dundas has not yet returned any anſwer*.

In Mr Playfair's abſence, Mr James Gibſon, as agent for Mr Kemble, wrote a letter to Mr King, the other truſtee, offering a rent of L. 500 Sterling for the Theatres, or ſuch other rent as ſhould be fixed upon by the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas. The letter is here referred to †. Alſo the anſwer by Mr Playfair on his return ‡. This letter contains concluſive evidence of the plan which Mr Kemble had laid down, of obtaining the Theatres at an under-value, and that he and his adviſers conſidered, that the influence of the holders of the patent might be uſed as an inſtrument to compel the creditors to come into that meaſure.

The truſtees have too high an opinion of the honour and candour of the Noble Duke, and the Right Honourable Gentleman, in whoſe names the patent is held, to ſuppoſe that they could lend their influence to a meaſure ſo obviouſly unjuſt, and which would ſo effectually injure the private rights and property of every individual connected with the Theatre. Beſides, that every property is fairly worth to its proprietor, what it will bring in the public market, it is eaſy to ſhow, that the rent propoſed is altogether inadequate for the two Theatres; and that the attempt made by Mr Kemble, to compel the creditors to give it at that rent, is therefore highly unjuſt,

Twenty years ago, the Theatre of Edinburgh alone was let for five hundred guineas a-year, when it

* His anſwer has ſince been received, ſee No. XXIII.

† See No. XIII. ‡ No. XIV.

it had neither ſcenery nor decorations to half its preſent value. As the town is increaſed, and of courſe, the demand for theatrical amuſements, a higher rent may now be given than twenty years ago, other matters remaining on an equal footing. Beſides that, ſurely the Glaſgow Theatre, which coſt Mr Jackſon more than L. 2000 Sterling, is worth ſome rent.

Mr Jackson can eaſily inſtruct, that the Theatre, as it now ſtands, has coſt him not leſs than L. 7000 Sterling; that to keep the fabric, the ſcenery, wardrobe, &c. in proper repair, coſt him hitherto, annually, not leſs than L. 300 Sterling; and as theſe muſt be ſtill kept in repair, it is ſubmitted, that a rent of L. 1000 Sterling is nothing more than an adequate recompenſe for the ſums laid out; and that the idea of its being an unreaſonable burden impoſed upon the public amuſements of the city, is without foundation. The truſtees are confident, that if theſe facts are ſtated to the holders of the patent, they will not refuſe their conſent. It is therefore propoſed, that this meeting ſhall approve of the tranſaction made by Mr Playfair with Mrs Eſten, and appoint the ſame to be carried into effect; and alſo authoriſe the truſtees to ſtate the facts above mentioned in a memorial to the holders of the patent.

It was further ſtated, that ſince the buſineſs of letting the Theatres to Mrs Eſten became public, the ſupporters of Mr Kemble had, by paragraphs in the newſpapers, and otherwiſe, attempted to call in queſtion her right to the leaſe, as well as that of the creditors to grant it. How far a conſpiracy of this ſort might deſerve public proſecution and puniſhment,

might be a matter for future deliberation. At preſent, it was ſubmitted, that the creditors ought, in juſtice to themſelves, to authoriſe an advertiſement to be put into the London and Edinburgh newſpapers, by their authority, expreſſive of the circumſtances and facts of their having let the Theatres as before recited.

No. XIII.

Edinburgh, 10th Auguſt 1792.

SIR,

ON the part of Mr Stephen Kemble, manager of the Theatre Royal, Newcaſtle, I hereby make offer to you, as one of the truſtees on the eſtate of Mr John Jackſon, of the ſum of five hundred pounds Sterling, for a leaſe for one year, from the 2d day of November next, of the Theatres of Edinburgh and Glaſgow. Mr Kemble will, beſides the above ſum, pay the whole public burdens due from both Theatres.

OR Mr Kemble will pay ſuch rent as ſhall be fixed by his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, and the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, the patentees. He will find unexceptionable ſecurity for performance of his engagements; and if the truſtees chuſe it, he will extend the leaſe to ſuch longer period of time as they ſhall ſettle with him. I am,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

JAMES GIBSON.

Mr John King, accomptant in Edinburgh.

No.

No. XIV.

SIR,

YOUR letter, addreſſed to Mr King, dated the 10th of Auguſt 1792, was ſent by him to me this day, containing an offer of L. 500.

THE offer is altogether inadequate, and at whatever period it had been made, it would not have been accepted. It is now, however, two late, as I have agreed proviſionally to let the Theatre for L. 1000 to Mrs Eſten, in conſequence of the powers from the laſt meeting of creditors.

FOR your delay in not offering, you can only blame yourſelf; as I told you in Princes-ſtreet, a day or two after the Theatres were advertiſed, that I had offers, which would be accepted of, if Mr Kemble did not come forward in time.

As to the offer being in any reſpect adequate, your knowledge in the buſineſs, when acting for the former truſtee, muſt ſatisfy you to the contrary.

LAST year, you did not heſitate to declare, that you would ſhut up the Theatre, rather than take ſuch a rent, or allow any perſons whatever to control the rent. What reaſon there is for altering your opinion ſo completely this year, you can beſt explain.

As to a reference of the rent to the Duke of Hamilton and Mr Dundas, had you made ſuch a propoſal at the meeting of creditors, you would have known their ſentiments. Although I entertain a very great reſpect for the Noble Duke and

Mr

Mr Dundas, I ſhould doubt how far a reference would be a proper mode of diſpoſing of the property of creditors; and I am confident, that neither of them would incline to enter into ſuch a buſineſs. I am, &c.

ROBERT PLAYFAIR.

No. XV.

EDINBURGH THEATRICALS.

THE conteſt for manager of this Theatre is at laſt ended. On Wedneſday the 18th inſtant, the Dean of Faculty ſettled it thus: That Mr Kemble, who this year rents the Theatres of the creditors of Mr Jackſon, the late manager, at the enormous rent of L. 1360, is to pay Mr Jackſon half the profits ariſing this ſeaſon; and every other ſeaſon after, Mr Kemble is to be proprietor with Jackſon, and ſole manager, for which he is to be allowed a ſalary out of the profits; and that ſalary to be hereafter appointed by the Dean of Faculty.

AT firſt ſight, it may appear not equitable, that Mr Kemble ſhould give Jackſon half the profits of this year, after hazarding ſo large a ſum for the rent. It is thus explained: Subſequent to Mr Kemble's taking the Theatre, he made Jackſon a voluntary offer of half the concern, provided Jackſon found ſecurity for his part of the rent. This Jackſon accepted, but did not produce that ſecurity which

which Kemble approved. This matter was left to the deciſion of the Dean of Faculty, which he determined as above*.

THE ſeaſon has been ſo ſucceſsful, as to yield conſiderable profits: So, though Kemble gives up the half of theſe profits, he has got in return half of the property, while Jackſon has any concern in it. This ſpeculation, therefore, has been ultimately good.

JACKSON has too long ſuppreſſed the public entertainment. The whole of his conduct has appeared inexplicable, though he has held the Theatres for eleven years.

ARGUS, 28*th July* 1792.

TO THE PUBLIC.

LONDON.

KEMBLE writes, that he is ſafe in the *Edinburgh* Theatre—that the *Dean of Faculty* aſſures him no other Perſon ſhall have the Houſe; and if any Company ſhould open *another*, *he* will commit them to priſon for *ſturdy vagrants* and *vagabonds*.—They who

* The decreet-arbitral was not iſſued till Auguſt 9th, but the purport of it was thus anticipated in the above advertiſement, which was inſerted by an intimate of Mr Kemble's, who confeſſed that he did it *to prevent bidders*, of which I ſhall produce proof when required.

who therefore engage here, will do well to conſider this *threat*.

PUBLIC LEDGER,
Aug. 28. 1792.

There were a variety of other advertiſements in the different papers in London, to the ſame purport, the contents of which were MALICIOUS, SCANDALOUS, and FALSE.

No. XVI.

ADMONITION and EXHORTATION by the REVEREND PRESBYTERY of EDINBURGH, to all within their Bounds, dated, *Edinburgh, January* 5. 1757.

THE Preſbytery taking into their ſerious conſideration the declining ſtate of religion, the open profanation of the Lord's day, the contempt of public worſhip, the growing luxury and levity of the preſent age, in which ſo many ſeem lovers of pleaſure, more than lovers of God; and being particularly affected with the *unprecedented countenance* given of late to the play-houſe in this place, when the ſtate of the nation, and the circumſtances of the poor, make ſuch hurtful entertainments ſtill more pernicious; judge it their indiſpenſible duty to expreſs, in the moſt open and ſolemn manner, the deep concern they feel on this occaſion.

THE

The opinion which the Chriſtian church has always entertained of ſtage plays and players, as prejudicial to the intereſts of religion and morality, is well known; and the fatal influence which they commonly have on the far greater part of mankind, particularly the younger ſort, is too obvious to be called in queſtion.

To enumerate how many ſervants, apprentices, and ſtudents in different branches of literature, in this city and ſuburbs, have been ſeduced from their proper buſineſs, by attending the ſtage, would be a painful and diſagreeable taſk.

The Preſbytery, in the year 1727, when conſiſting of many pious, prudent, and learned miniſters, whoſe praiſe is in all the churches, being aware of theſe evils, did prepare a paper, which was read from the ſeveral pulpits within their bounds, warning their people againſt the dangerous infection of the Theatre, then erected there.

In the year 1737, the legiſlature in their great wiſdom, did, by an act of the 10th of George II. enact and declare, "that any perſon who ſhould for hire or reward, act, or cauſe to be acted, any play or other entertainment of the ſtage, without the ſpecial licence and authority mentioned in the ſaid act, ſhould be deemed a rogue and a vagabond; and for every ſuch offence, ſhould forfeit the ſum of L. 50 ſterling."

At that time a project was ſet on foot to obtain a licenced Theatre in this city; but the maſters and profeſſors of the univerſity, ſupported by the magiſtrates, having prepared a petition, ſetting forth the dangerous tendency of a playhouſe here, with re-

ſpect to the important intereſts of virtue and learning, the project was laid aſide.

The players, however, being ſo audacious as to continue to act in defiance of the law, the Preſbytery did, at their own charge, proſecute them before the court of ſeſſion, and prevailed in the proceſs: The players were fined in terms of law, and warrants being iſſued for apprehending them, they fled from juſtice. But others came in their place; who ſince that time have attempted to elude the law, by changing the name of the *Playhouſe* into that of the *Concert-hall.*

As ſuch a ſlight evaſion, the mere change of a name, could not make the ſmalleſt variation in the nature of the thing, the Preſbytery continued to do all in their power, and in their ſphere, to prevent the growing evil; and think themſelves at this time loudly called upon in *one body*, and with *one voice*, to expoſtulate, in the bowels of love and compaſſion, with all under their care and inſpection.

When our gracious Sovereign, attentive to the voice of providence, is calling from the throne to humiliation and prayer, how unſeemly is it for his ſubjects to give themſelves up to mirth and jollity! when the war in which we are engaged, and many awful tokens of the divine diſpleaſure, beſpeak, as in the language of an inſpired writer, *to redeem the time, becauſe the days are evil;* ſhould that time be ſquandered away in running the conſtant ground of fooliſh, not to ſay ſinful amuſements? When the wants and cries of the numerous poor require extraordinary ſupplies, how unaccountable is it to laviſh away vaſt ſums for ſuch vain and idle purpoſes!

purpoſes! When the wiſdom of the nation has guided the inhabitants of this city and ſuburbs from the infection of the ſtage, by a plain and expreſs ſtatute, is it not a high inſtance of folly to break down that barrier, and open a door with their own hands for theatrical repreſentations? which are in many reſpects no leſs inconſiſtent with good policy, than unfriendly to religion; and will be found ſooner or later to affect their temporal as well as ſpiritual intereſts.

On theſe accounts, and for many other obvious and weighty conſiderations, the Preſbytery, warmed with juſt concern for the good of ſouls, do, in the fear of God, warn, exhort, and obteſt, all within their bounds, as they regard the glory of God, the credit of our holy religion, and their own welfare, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, by ſhewing a ſacred regard for the Lord's day, and all the ordinances of divine inſtitution; and by diſcouraging in their reſpective ſpheres, the illegal and dangerous entertainments of the ſtage.

The Preſbytery would plead with all in authority, with teachers of youth, parents and maſters of families, to reſtrain, by every habile method, ſuch as are under their influence, from frequenting thoſe ſeminaries of folly and vice. They would particularly beſeech the younger part of their flocks, to beware, leſt, by example, or from a fooliſh deſire of appearing in the faſhionable world, they be miſled into ſuch pernicious ſnares; ſnares which muſt neceſſarily retard, if not entirely mar that progreſs in the reſpective parts of their education, on which their future uſefulneſs and ſucceſs depend. And

laſtly, they would entreat and obteſt perſons of all ranks and conditions, that inſtead of contributing to the growing licentiouſneſs of the age, they may diſtinguiſh themſelves by ſhining as lights in the world, being blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God, without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe nation, occupying, for the great purpoſes of the honour of God, and the good of mankind, that time, that ſubſtance, and thoſe other talents, which they have received from their Lord and Maſter.

On the whole, the Preſbytery, in the moſt earneſt manner, call upon all who have the intereſt of religion at heart, to plead fervently at the throne of grace, in the prevailing name of the great Mediator, *untill the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderneſs be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a foreſt; then judgement ſhall dwell in the wilderneſs, and righteouſneſs remain in the fruitful field; and the work of righteouſneſs ſhall be peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs, greatneſs and aſſurance for ever.*

The Preſbytery appoint this *admonition* and *exhortation* to be read from all the pulpits within their bounds, on the laſt Sabbath, being the thirtieth day of this month, immediately after divine ſervice before noon.

No.

No. XVII.

RESOLUTIONS of the PRESBYTERY of GLASGOW, reſpecting the repreſentation of the Tragedy of *Douglas*, as inſerted in the public prints, *February* 2. 1757.

THE Preſbytery having ſeen a printed paper, intitled, "*An Admonition and Exhortation of the Reverend Preſbytery of Edinburgh*," which, among other evils bewailing, laments the extraordinary and unprecedented countenance given of late to the play-houſe in that city; and having good reaſon to believe, that this refers to the following melancholy, but notour facts, that one who is a miniſter of the church of Scotland, did himſelf write and compoſe a ſtage-play, intitled, *The tragedy of Douglas*, and got it to be acted in the Theatre at Edinburgh; and that he, with ſeveral other miniſters of this church, were preſent, and ſome of them oftner than once, at the acting of the ſaid play, before a numerous audience; the Preſbytery, deeply affected with this new and ſtrange appearance, do think it their duty to declare, as they hereby do, that they agree with the Preſbytery of Edinburgh, in the ſentiments publiſhed by them with reſpect to ſtage-plays; and particularly that ſuch entertainments, from what has uſually been exhibited in them, and alſo from the diſſolute lives (for moſt part) and infamous characters of the players, have been looked upon, by the Chriſtian church, in all ages, and of all different communions, as extremely

tremely prejudicial to religion and morality, as well as hurtful to the other valuable intereſts of human ſociety, by the waſteful expence of money and time they have occaſioned; and being convinced by long experience, a ſure teſt of the tendency of any action or practice, how vain it is to expect ſuch a reformation of the ſtage, as inconſiſtent with the ends aforeſaid; and therefore ſuch entertainments ſhould be diſcouraged and laid aſide. And the Preſbytery, farther conſidering that the unprecedented countenance given the play-houſe, in the inſtance mentioned, is greatly aggravated by a late act of parliament, rendering the ſtage (becauſe not licenced) unlawful in Scotland; and alſo from the preſent circumſtances of the nation with regard to the war we are engaged in, the dearth of proviſions, and the awful tokens of the anger of juſt heaven againſt us; they therefore hereby appoint and intruſt ſuch of their members as ſhall repreſent them in the enſuing General Aſſembly of this Church, to move and inſiſt, in a regular manner, that the venerable aſſembly do declare, by a public act, their judgement, and that of this national church, againſt the entertainments of the theatre, as of very hurtful tendency to the intereſts of religion and ſociety. *Secondly*, That the aſſembly do ſtrictly enquire if the facts above mentioned, *viz.* that a miniſter of this church has compoſed and procured to be acted, on the theatre in the Canongate of Edinburgh, the tragedy called *Douglas*; and that the repreſentation of the ſaid tragedy was attended by him and ſeveral other miniſters, having been under the conſideration of the Preſbyteries reſpectively concerned; and whether their miniſters, being found guil-

ty,

ty, have been cenſured as their faults deſerved; and to give ſuch directions, as they in their wiſdoms ſhall find neceſſary, that ſuch miniſters, and all others, may be ſenſible, that the church of Scotland will never protect her members in a practice ſo unbecoming their character, and of ſuch pernicious tendency to the great intereſts of religion, induſtry, and virtue. And, *laſtly*, That the aſſembly would uſe their beſt endeavours to obtain ſuch an explication and enforcement of the act of the 17th George the II. anent the play-houſe, as it may not be liable to the pitiful evaſions by which it is now eluded.

No. XXIII.

Melvill-caſtle, November 22. 1792.

MADAM,

MR DUNDAS deſires me to acquaint you, in anſwer to the meſſage I delivered to him from you, that it is not his intention at all to interfere in the diſpute between Mrs Eſten and Mr Kemble. I am,

Madam, Your moſt obedient ſervant,

(Signed) ROBERT HEPBURN.

No. XXIV.

LETTER from Mr PLAYFAIR to Mr GIBSON, Agent for Mr Kemble.

17th February 1793.

SIR,

IN your papers, given into Court for Mr Kemble, you mention that the Duke of Hamilton's conſent to Mrs Eſten was only a day prior to that given by Mr Dundas to Mr Kemble. I underſtand that ſeveral months before, you wrote to the Duke of Hamilton, requeſting his conſent to Mr Kemble's performance under the patent; to which his Grace anſwered, That he had already given his conſent to Mrs Eſten. I am to requeſt that you will lodge in proceſs a copy of your letter, and of the Duke's anſwer. I am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,
(Signed) ROBERT PLAYFAIR.

No. XXV.

LETTER from his Grace the Duke of HAMILTON to Mr GIBSON, produced in conſequence of the requeſt in the preceeding Letter.

Leeming Lane, September 8. 1792.

SIR,

HAVING conſidered with attention the ſtate of facts relative to the Edinburgh Theatre, I think, that notwithſtanding

notwithſtanding the very high opinion I entertain of Mr Henry Erſkine the Dean of Faculty, yet I cannot conceive that Mr Jackſon's truſtees, or his creditors, can be reſtrained by Mr Jackſon's miſſive, referred to in the decreet-arbitral, from entering into an agreement for the leaſe of the Edinburgh and Glaſgow Theatres, to any other perſon than Mr Kemble.

I HAVE been informed, that previous to the decreet, a treaty had been depending between Mr Jackſon's truſtees and creditors, and Mrs Eſten, for a leaſe of thoſe Theatres, from the ſecond day of November next; and an agreement to that effect was actually executed in London, at or about the date of the decreet: *I therefore, as one of the patentees, cannot reaſonably with-hold the benefit of the patent from Mrs Eſten.*

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

(Signed) HAMILTON & BRANDON.

James Gibſon, Eſq;

FINIS.

G R III